THE PUBLIC LIBRARY
OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON

WITHDRAWN
No longer the property of the
Boston Public Library.
Sale of this material benefited the Library

The DAY *of* CONCORD *and* LEXINGTON

GENERAL WILLIAM HEATH.

In command against Lord Percy on the latter's retreat from Lexington.

The DAY *of* CONCORD *and* LEXINGTON

The Nineteenth of April, 1775

BY

ALLEN FRENCH

ILLUSTRATED

Uphams Corner Branch

BOSTON

LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

1925

Pr 3144

Copyright, 1925,
BY LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.

All rights reserved

Published March, 1925

uc
Eng. 10. 1931
C

uc
E241
.L6F8

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3-14-46
40-65

To
ALETTA

The DAY *of* CONCORD *and* LEXINGTON

The Nineteenth of April, 1775

By

ALLEN FRENCH

The celebration in 1925 of the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the Nineteenth of April in the historic towns of Lexington and Concord makes timely this account of the events of that memorable day in 1775. Basing his story entirely on documents contemporary to the fight or the accounts of eye-witnesses, Mr. French has made use of sources hitherto unavailable, notably certain papers of Timothy Pickering and the Reverend William Emerson, who occupied the Old Manse at the time. After making clear the situation existing in the afternoon of the eighteenth of April, Mr. French narrates the true story of the ride of Paul Revere and William Dawes and then devotes the major portion of his book primarily to the military side of the happenings on the nineteenth. The book ends with Lord Percy's retreat, based in part on data which came to light only three years ago.

Mr. French is a Concord writer of established reputation, and his lucid style makes the book as distinctly readable for the general reader as it is valuable for the student of American history. It is appropriately illustrated.

Preface

WRITING upon a subject on which I have more than once written in the past twenty-five years, it seems wise—lest I should be confronted with the difference between this effort and my former printed statements—to explain certain evident contradictions. The subject has a natural fascination for one living in its environment, and from the many books upon it one can easily absorb the general outline of the story. Having thus absorbed, it has been easy for me, upon occasion, to write an uncritical narrative of the Day of Concord and Lexington.

But in a period of leisure, combined with a new interest in the subject because of the approaching hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary, I have gone for information, no longer to books, but to the documents. Since some of the more important books on the subject were written, new evidence has been found, and during my own search I came across other papers, unutilized by historians hitherto. The result has been the changing of some of my earlier opinions.

In addition, the subject has forced the study of the Nineteenth from a military point of view. I am no soldier myself, yet my slight knowledge of tactics, weapons, and marksmanship have shown me that more is to be said of the fighting in 1775 than has yet been written down.

Still another consideration has encouraged me to offer one more book on this old subject. The modern trend of history-writing is most wholesome in its general result, for the old habit of undimmed admiration of our ancestors is now definitely abandoned. Writing with this new free-

dom, it has been easily possible to point out errors and blunders on the part of the patriot fighters, and to write of our English adversaries with fairness.

Therefore I have tried to use modern methods of research, with no preconceived theories to sustain, and no prejudices to defend. To learn the facts largely from contemporary documents, to test the traditional and discard the legendary, to show our ancestors as they were and conditions as they met them, is requisite in small episodes no less than in great, in war no less than in peace. Hence this attempt to show, for the first time, how the tactics and weapons of 1775, so different from our own, affected events on the Nineteenth of April. And hence the discarding of long-cherished beliefs as to our opponents.

One more consideration I will venture to offer. The new writing of history appears to treat war as a minor incident in the development of a people, and to stress in its place economic and social conditions. This natural reaction from the old worship of martial heroes, I believe to have gone too far. There is nothing more dramatic than the facts of war; they supply unrivalled human interest. But further, war is in itself an economic and social fact of overwhelming importance, and though its place in history may well be lessened, it can never be relegated to insignificance. There would seem to be, therefore, good reason for offering this monograph on the beginning of a great war.

I wish to express my thanks to the librarians of Concord, Boston, Harvard, and the Massachusetts Military Historical Society, and to the keepers of documents at the Massachusetts Archives, the Congressional Library, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the New York Public Library. But most I wish to express my indebtedness to the dead-and-gone makers of the great collection in the

Massachusetts Historical Society. Without it, and without the welcome offered the outsider by the officials of the Society, this book would scarcely have been written. I am greatly obliged to Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson for the use of family papers, hitherto unpublished; and I acknowledge, as any writer on this subject must, the help derived from Mr Harold Murdock's recent book. Finally, the help of my wife has been invaluable. No historian writes his book alone, and for the assistance freely given me I am deeply grateful.

ALLEN FRENCH

Concord, Massachusetts, January 26, 1925.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	PREFACE	vii
I	THE NINETEENTH IN HISTORY	1
II	THE GENERAL SITUATION	3
III	BOSTON IN 1774–1775	8
IV	AMERICAN PREPARATIONS	17
V	FLINTLOCKS AND MARKSMANSHIP	27
VI	BOTH SIDES MAKE READY	37
VII	GAGE AND HIS PROBLEM	50
VIII	THE EVENING OF APRIL 18TH	64
IX	PAUL REVERE AND WILLIAM DAWES	74
X	REVERE'S RIDE	81
XI	THE NEWS IN LEXINGTON	95
XII	THE FIRING AT LEXINGTON	100
XIII	AMERICAN TESTIMONY ON LEXINGTON	114
XIV	BRITISH STATEMENTS	129
XV	DOOLITTLE'S PICTURE, AND BRITISH TACTICS	133
XVI	THE PROVINCIALS AT LEXINGTON	143
XVII	CONCORD IN 1775	148
XVIII	THE PROVINCIALS RETREAT BEFORE THE BRITISH	156
XIX	THE REGULARS IN CONCORD	167
XX	THE SEARCH FOR MILITARY STORES	177
XXI	CONCORD FIGHT	182
XXII	BRITISH TACTICS AGAIN	193
XXIII	WILLIAM EMERSON AT THE FIGHT	203
XXIV	THE AMERICANS ON THE JONES HILL	207
XXV	THE BOY AND HIS HATCHET	211
XXVI	MERIAM'S CORNER	215
XXVII	SMITH'S DESPERATE CASE	220

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXVIII	The Rescue	226
XXIX	Percy's Halt in Lexington	233
XXX	The Fight in Menotomy	237
XXXI	The American Fire	252
XXXII	Pickering's Chance	259
XXXIII	The British Reach Safety	265
XXXIV	Summary	271
XXXV	Bibliography	275
	Index	287

ILLUSTRATIONS

General William Heath ..... *Frontispiece*
In command against Lord Percy on the latter's retreat from Lexington.

Facing Page

General Thomas Gage 12
Governor of Massachusetts, 1774–5.

Doctor Joseph Warren 38
In his later uniform as General.

Samuel Adams 56
Engraved by Paul Revere from Copley's portrait.

John Hancock 90
Engraved by Paul Revere from Copley's portrait.

Amos Doolittle's First Plate 134
"The Battle of Lexington, April 19th, 1775." Showing the Americans dispersing, Pitcairn and his Troops, the Tavern and Meeting-house, and the Grenadiers on the road to Concord.

Amos Doolittle's Second Plate 152
"A View of the Town of Concord." Showing Pitcairn and Smith on the hill, their troops below, and beyond the Meeting-house and the Tavern, a detachment destroying stores.

Amos Doolittle's Third Plate 190
"The Engagement at the North Bridge in Concord." Showing the advance of the Provincials led by Robinson and Buttrick, and the Flight of the British.

Amos Doolittle's Fourth Plate 232
"A View of the South Part of Lexington." Showing the meeting of Smith and Percy, the minute-men firing on their troops, and the burning buildings.

Lord Percy 252
In command of the Brigade which rescued Colonel Smith's Detachment.

The DAY *of* CONCORD *and* LEXINGTON

The Nineteenth of April, 1775

I

MODERN history burrows so deeply into causes that it scarcely has room for events. In place of the old descriptions of battles, of the prominence once given to kings, statesmen, and civilian or military heroes, history now occupies itself with economic and social conditions, and sometimes seems to regard happenings as mere accidents, to be allowed as little space as possible. In the tapestry of written history, where in the foreground great figures used to parade, all has been changed: the old background has become the real design, and upon it the foreground merely traces faint patterns.

To be specific, let us consider the comparative spaces given to the story of the fighting at Lexington and Concord in the older histories and the new. Writing at a time when history still came within Freeman's definition of "past politics", George Bancroft, in his history of the United States, gave to April 19th two chapters, a total of sixteen pages in the Centenary Edition. But writing in the twentieth century Channing, in his five volumes under the same title, gives the story but two pages, A. B. Hart in his twenty-seven volumes gives less than three, and Woodrow Wilson in his nine volumes gives but one page of text. In contrast with these American books, it seems

strange that the Englishman Trevelyan in his four volumes should give five pages to the subject. But Trevelyan shows, as so few do, an interest in the military aspect of the story. He is offset by the latest American book, for James Truslow Adams, though limiting his four hundred and fifty pages to the subject of revolutionary New England, gives but two to the events of that day.

These figures are given, not in complaint of any slurring of important events, but first to show modern tendencies in the writing of history, and second to explain why this volume asks attention to a longer presentation of the subject. The reason is that here is offered not general history, but local.

To the local historian it is as important a duty to concentrate his attention upon the events in his field, as it is for the general historian to study the causes that provided the events. Thus for the local historian the background may be blurred if only the foreground is made clear. It is his means of making his contribution to the history of an epoch.

Here, then, is a study of the events of a single day, a history of a battle so slight in its casualties that in many a war it would pass as a skirmish. Yet skirmishes have sometimes been more important than pitched battles; and as the contest on the Plains of Abraham ended an era in American history, so the fighting on the day of Concord and Lexington began a new one. As marking a break with the past, the beginning of new things that have gone on progressing until now, that day will always have a significance far beyond its scale. Again, it has the element of romance. The closest study of the story of the Nineteenth of April, 1775, only serves to prove its permanent interest and value.

II

SINCE even a local history needs to have its background, however blurred, we must sketch, as briefly as possible, the situation that preceded and caused the fighting at Concord and Lexington. It is necessary to know why men who had so long lived peaceably together under the English king, had to separate.

And yet, since the whole matter is freshly under discussion by modern historians, examining anew the legal grounds of the American contentions, the constitutional argument is no longer so clear as it seemed a few years ago. It is now claimed that the American position was groundless and dogmatic, and that the colonists finally took refuge in pure idealism. The reasoning is involved, and examination of it is long. In complete sympathy with the modern school of history which strives to do away with the old New England ancestor-worship, let us nevertheless look at the matter as compared with political readjustments since that day.

What the American colonies wanted was the position of States within the British empire, managing their own local affairs and having a voice in imperial matters which concerned them. Though the idea was so new as to be practically unformulated, they had long had a large share of the desired freedom. If the British had only allowed the fact to continue, the colonists would not have insisted on the theory.[1]

But in the days of the Stamp Act, and afterward, there existed among the leaders of the British state a political

[1] See repeated statements to this effect, in Andrews' "Colonial Background of the American Revolution."

wrong-headedness comparable to the perversity which long persisted in the treatment of Ireland. It mattered nothing that George the Third and his Friends were to become bywords, while the honors of history are given to Chatham, Burke, Fox, and the other leaders of the opposition. The liberals were not strong enough to change the British policy, the remonstrances from America were unavailing, and so the dispute came to a crisis.

A recent writer tells us that "There was then, and there is to-day, no place in the strict interpretation of the English Constitution for a mature colony of freemen." [1] Fortunately for the British Empire, there seems now to be a sufficient number of loose constructionists to allow England and the dominions to get along together. In the seventeen-seventies earnest efforts toward such a loose construction were made, commissions of inquiry were urged, and so late as 1777 Chatham made a last desperate effort to compound the difficulties. It was quite in vain.

To the modern mind it is no argument that because whole English communities submitted to be unrepresented in Parliament, the colonies also should have done so. It took three generations after 1775 to bring about parliamentary reform in England, but the Americans can scarcely be blamed for refusing to wait so long. They were content to be unrepresented in England only so long as Parliament should not force upon them the result of its abuses. Political dogmatists, even idealists, they may have been, but it is difficult for the modern mind to blame

[1] James Truslow Adams, "Revolutionary New England," pp. 443–444. In this book will also be found the statement that the American political contentions were groundless and dogmatic. See, however, Charles M. Andrews' book, just referred to, and "The American Revolution", by Charles H. McIlwaine. The views of these two writers are much more in accord with those here given.

them for striking out toward the freedom which is now enjoyed by all Anglo-Saxon countries.

Interwoven with the political differences were economic troubles. Generally speaking, England's financial difficulties were greater than those of the colonies, and her military sacrifices for the sake of her dependencies were noteworthy. On the other hand the colonists had their own hard times; and further, they knew very well that, as Chatham said, they had carried England through three wars in America. With growing self-consciousness they objected to earning their living only at the mercy of men who ignored their needs. Parliament's greatest exhibition of selfishness and ignorance came when, almost at the opening of the war, it closed the cod fisheries, by which New England had so long been sustained, to the Yankee fishermen.

This shows the complete blindness, among the British ruling class, to the colonial position. The British Tory was in power, and to him democracy was a myth. He regarded the tiller of the soil as a peasant, and never grasped the fact that Americans were accustomed to decide their own local affairs. To him the insistence of a town meeting on its rights was insolence; and not even the petition of the City of London in favor of the fishermen could make him see that the colonists were entitled to a living. The American Tory has of late years had his day in court, with decisions in his favor. But he at least should have known the sentiments in the hearts of his countrymen, and should have tried more earnestly to bring the danger home to the Tory across the sea. Trevelyan has pointed out that the Yankee fishermen in Washington's army signally served him at the siege of Boston, at Long Island, and in crossing the Delaware. But fishermen and blacksmiths, merchants

and farmers, alike were misunderstood by British and American Tories.

Much may truly be said of the loss to America in the actual abilities of the Tories, and principally in their potential value as a conservative balance wheel; but there is this to be said on the other side. If there was anything peculiarly her own which America was to give to the world, in energy of character and in fearless political experimentation, the Tory had little part in it. His was the stationary type of mind, the backward looking, the reverential. He never could wholeheartedly go along with the progress of his native country. America has doubtless suffered in losing his slow mind; his careful testing of new proposals. But in a civil war more difficult and even more desperate than nineteenth-century writers liked to acknowledge, the country had to separate from the men of fixed ideas.

The long war of words came slowly to the war of deeds. The Stamp Act, though repealed, was followed by the nagging perversity of the Townshend acts, and when these were withdrawn the tax on tea was left, no economic burden, but a mere irritant to keep the wound unhealed. In December, 1773, resulted the Boston Tea Party, for which Parliament punished the unrepentant town. The first revengeful enactment was the Boston Port Bill, closing the port so closely that no ship could enter, and even private vessels and rowboats could not ply in the harbor. More irritating to the province at large was the bill "for the better regulating the government of the Massachusetts Bay." This took into the king's hands the appointment of the council, and consequently of all officers of justice, even to the constables; it likewise forbade the calling of town meetings except for the purpose of electing town officers. Massachusetts and all New England felt

this as a blow at the sacredness of the charters. Against the operation of these acts all America protested.

The Americans were not innovators in objecting to the tyranny of king and parliament. Since the days of John Hampden there was nothing new about that. Charles the First had had his Cromwell. How was it that George the Third was not ready to profit by that example? Though the parallel was pointed out by Americans, it was not considered in England. Beginning to flood Boston with troops in the spring of 1774, and putting into force the new acts, the king and his advisers were sure that they had found the cure to the situation.

III

THE beliefs of the king and his party on the one hand, and of the American opposition on the other, were necessarily tested out in the actual theater of operations. Here local conditions had much to do with guiding the course of events.

In those days the physical features of much of eastern Massachusetts, and more particularly of Boston, were different from now. In the country the roads rambled, and to judge from the Doolittle prints the woods were more nearly cleared than they are to-day. In Lexington was a hill that influenced military operations, which has since been levelled; and in Concord were a road and bridge which, long disused, were restored in 1875 merely as a memorial. But the greatest difference is to be studied at Boston, where in 1774 not one of the great modern changes had been begun. The town had not yet grown to fill its peninsula; the three hills were at their original height, Beacon Hill being much taller than now. By this token [1] none of the coves and indentations of the shore had been filled, and especially no attempt had been made to widen the Neck, which at high water was a narrow strip of land connecting the pear-shaped town with Roxbury on the mainland. Our present Washington Street then ran along the Neck, interrupted near Dover Street [2] by the old forti-

[1] The filling of the coves was begun by levelling the hills.

[2] Dover Street is generally given approximately as the location of the old "lines." See maps of the period, and references in the "Memorial History of Boston," especially III, v, "the main defence was at Dover Street, the outer works being near the line of Canton Street." The latter were begun by Gage in March, according to Heath's report of March 20 on the "two mudd Breastworks . . . on Boston necke, at the distance of about ninety or one hundred

fications which the new governor began strengthening. On the east side of the Neck were the waters of the harbor; on the other stretched the Back Bay, wide reaches of tidal flats through which ran the channel of the Charles. From the northern end of Boston, ferries plied to Charlestown, which alone of the surrounding modern neighborhoods was a town of any consequence. Roxbury was a town near the Neck; Dorchester, Milton, Brookline, even Cambridge, were similar towns to be reached by a few miles of country road. East Boston was Noddles Island with but a few buildings. Somerville, Everett, Brighton, the Newtons, and all the rest of the neighborhood now so solidly built up, were farms except for little villages here and there.

Boston itself was an old-fashioned town, unaffected as yet by the extravagant nonsense that characterized London. Both Whigs and Tories were sober folk, much given to church-building, as is attested by the many spires which show in every picture of the town of that day. The place was almost countrified, having not only the open Common but much free land along the westerly slopes of Beacon Hill, besides gardens and orchards everywhere among the houses.

This colonial capital was inhabited by a people devoted to commercial enterprise, seagoing folk and therefore not entirely provincial, inheritors of a strong religious tradition and consequently somewhat stubborn, with a fine Old Testament vocabulary of denunciations and exhortations. In the hundred and fifty years since the town had been settled, a number of its leading families had acquired pri-

rods in front of the old fortifications." See 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, IV, 292–294. Against Gage's strengthening of his defences the provincials repeatedly protested. His replies were cool and sensible.

vate fortunes, and had developed a little local aristocracy. Following the usual course of human nature, many of this upper class took the royal side of the political controversy. Most of their men were Harvard graduates, and taken as a whole this group of people, the Tories, would be an element of strength in any community. Other people of exactly the same social position took a different view, and to these Whigs were added many of the working classes: rope-makers, shipbuilders, and sailors whom the Port Bill threw out of work, besides artisans and craftsmen in large numbers.[1]

On the side of the Whigs were the great majority of the ministers. Exactly as earlier in Scotland, these opponents of an established church, untainted by hope of preferment and equally untouched by pacificism, preached resistance to the new limitations to American freedom. Their whole hearts were in the cause, and it is as a direct result that four of them (Emerson of Concord, Clarke of Lexington, Gordon of Roxbury, and Stiles of Newport) are

[1] It seems preferable to use the old party names Whig and Tory, whose meaning is still quite well known among us, rather than Loyalist and Patriot, which Mr. J. T. Adams uses. His object may be to avoid any opprobrium attaching to the word Tory. But the result might be to bring into greater opprobrium two better words of a wider and higher significance. For not all the actions on either side were such as we like to ascribe to loyalists and especially to patriots, and it is well to have the worst of them covered by the designations of political partisanship. Certainly the brand of patriotism which Mr. Adams imputes to the Whigs is not such as any one likes to associate with the word; his attitude toward them is shown by his calling them radicals rather than liberals, notwithstanding the wide difference in significance between the two terms. On the other hand, the Tories were loyal, not to a high ideal of government, but to an attachment to the old order made blind by political feeling. Like the stand-patters of to-day, who in spite of their claim to one-hundred per cent. Americanism are among the worst influences in our government, the Tories of 1775, whether English or American, adhered to the fatal doctrine of standing still when the only peaceful solution of the political problem was by an advance in political theory.

among the chief contemporary historians of the Nineteenth of April. Except Matthew Byles, who wisely refused to preach politics, all the ministers of Boston were Whigs.[1]

To this town in May of 1774 came General Thomas Gage, the first military governor of Massachusetts, with the four regiments that were expected to cow the Whigs into submission. Thus were introduced into Boston the young English officers whose letters and diaries have sketched the social situation or given us pictures of events. So far as we know, Gage was little given to personal letter-writing; but his brigadier Lord Percy was. Ensign De Berniere wrote a short and precious narrative, and Lieutenant John Barker depicted himself as clearly in his diary as if he had been sitting for his portrait to Hogarth. Aside from his letters, Percy was a man of note, but casual scribblings are all that have made the others important to us. Exactly as that otherwise unknown small Whig merchant, John Andrews, is a personage of those times because of the letters that he wrote, so Barker and De Berniere, and Captain W. Glanville Evelyn, and others still minor, are important authorities for a study of Boston in 1775. An itch for self-expression, a desire to grumble on paper, or a sense of duty to those at home, causing letters or journals to be written which frequently mere accident has preserved, secured the survival of these obscure wielders of the pen while perhaps their betters are forgotten.

The British occupation until April, 1775, was outwardly peaceful but full of minor irritations. Legal

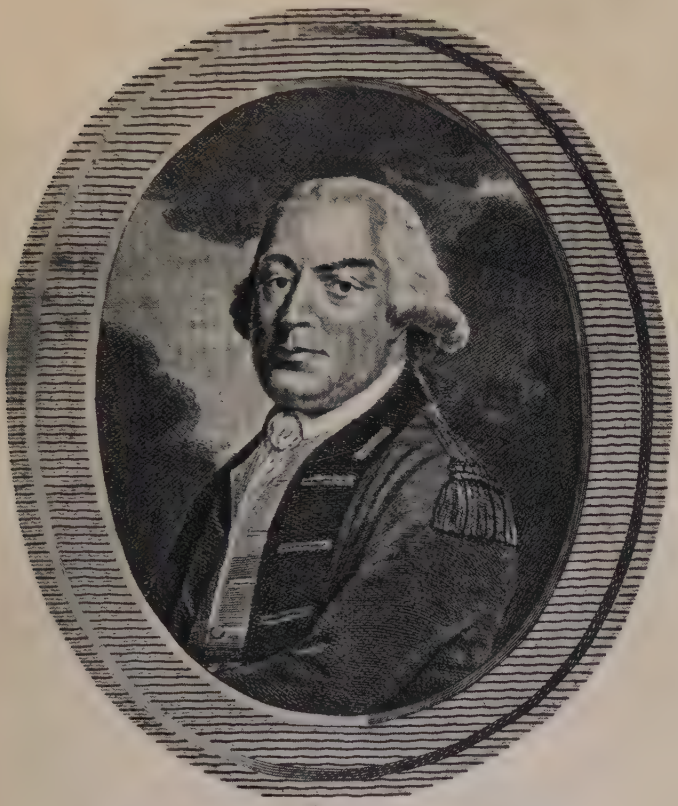
[1] For a very interesting discussion, which includes and goes much beyond the matter contained in this paragraph, see Charles Francis Adams' "Massachusetts, Its Historians and Its History."

obstructions skilfully brought forward by the Whigs kept the troops from being quartered on the inhabitants, and until November the regiments were mostly in tents on the Common, after which they went into barracks. Excellent as were the majority of British officers, it was inevitable that, in the system of purchase then prevailing, or even under any system, there were some who, though officers, were not always gentlemen, especially when fashionably in liquor. They kept the whole garrison in disfavor with the old-fashioned Whigs, who were outraged by constant violations of decorum. When a colonel lent his presence to a procession of the more high-spirited of his subalterns, conducting a countryman who, having foolishly tried to buy a musket of a soldier, had been tarred and feathered,[1] it is not to be wondered at that the younger officers indulged in all kinds of defiances and irritations of the inhabitants, from hacking Hancock's fence to taking liberties with pretty women in the streets.

But while the freedom customarily taken by young bloods in London was there a matter of course, in Boston there was no hesitation in resenting it. One has but to read the letters of the day to get both sides of some of these affairs, with the strong partisan tinge of each. The enlisted men also were often in hot water with the working people, and the General as well as influential men among the Whigs had their hands full in compounding these differences. Gage, to whom the Selectmen never hesitated to bring complaints, found it necessary to forbid soldiers off duty to wear their side arms, a regulation which inspired Lieutenant Barker to write a bitter entry in his jour-

[1] For the best documentary account of this Ditson affair, though wholly on the American side, see "Journals of Each Provincial Congress", p. 131, *footnote*.

Engraved for Murray's History of the American War.



GENERAL GAGE.

Printed for T. Robson, Newcastle upon Tyne.

General Thomas Gage.
Governor of Massachusetts, 1774-1775.

nal. To him the selectmen were "Vilains that would not censure one of their own Vagrants, even if he attempted the life of a Soldier; whereas if a Soldier errs in the least, who is more ready to accuse than Tommy?" [1] Poor Gage, thus nicknamed and called an "Old Woman" by his own people,[2] found it impossible to placate the Whigs; his orders were against him. On the other hand, when such a man as Lord Percy, after but a month in the country, could write, "The people here are a set of sly, artful, hypocritical rascals, cruel, & cowards",[3] it can easily be seen what would be the opinion of subalterns and enlisted men. Any one who goes far into the question of who fired first at Lexington is sure to find himself wondering whether the first trigger was not pulled because of the rankling memory of a clash in the streets of Boston.

As Gage tested the quality of his opponents, he came to a different idea as to the means necessary to subdue them. He had confidently landed with but four regiments in May, but when in September he seized the powder belonging to the province, he was surprised at the numbers of militia who marched to remonstrate, or if need be to fight. Within three days he wrote to General Haldimand in New York to bring all the troops under his command to Boston,[4] and in October Percy wrote of the "clever little

[1] John Barker, "The British in Boston", p. 4.

[2] Letters of John Andrews, Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, 1864–1865, p. 401.

[3] "Letters of Hugh, Earl Percy", p. 31. Percy landed in Boston July 5th, and wrote the letter from which the above is quoted on August 8th. Percy's most quoted condemnation of the inhabitants was written November 25, 1774. "The People here are the most designing, Artfull Villains in the World. They have not the least Idea of either Religion or Morality." But as will be seen, when once he had tested their military capacity, he changed his opinion of their cowardice.

[4] Gage to Haldimand, Boston, September 5. B 5 British Museum, 21665, p. 312. See Report of Canadian Archives for 1884.

army" which was thus got together. But Percy knew that more would be needed by spring, and in November Gage wrote to the ministry asking for twenty thousand men. This was denied him, as to raise so many would mean putting the army upon a war footing. All that Gage received from home was a total of eleven regiments in April, with five hundred marines and a small train of artillery.

Eleven regiments seem at first to be a strong force, but the regiments of 1775 were but small aggregations. The modern tactical unit is the squad of eight men, on which are based the company and the regiment, each of definite size, at least in theory. An American regiment is now 2500 men; previous to 1917 it was one thousand. But the study of eighteenth-century books of tactics seems to show that the regiment had no basic unit and no theoretical size, but depended upon the recruiting officer's ability to find men. Even in war time, regiments were surprisingly small. It seems fair to compute that Gage's army in April amounted to scarcely more than four thousand men.[1]

[1] For the figures as to Gage's army, see Richard Frothingham's "History of the Siege of Boston", pp. 46, 55; E. G. Porter in "Memorial History of Boston", III, 64; Jared Sparks' "Writings of Washington", III, 506. E. E. Hale, in "One Hundred Years Ago", says 3500 men was the total. There exists in the Heath Papers (I, p. 20, in Massachusetts Historical Society; printed in I Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, IV, 292–294) a paper estimating Gage's army at 2800, but that is impossibly small. Dartmouth, in his letter to Gage of January 27, 1775, assumes that Gage then had in hand about 4000 effectives. The Richard Pope manuscript (photostat copy in Manuscript Department, New York Public Library) makes the definite statement that there were in Boston 4078 men. It names the regiments in Boston in April as the 4th, 5th, 10th, 23d, 38th, 43d, 47th, 52d, 59th, the 64th at Castle William, 8 companies of the 18th, 6 companies of the 65th, and 400 marines. This agrees pretty closely with the statements in Barker's "The British in Boston", except that the latter names three companies of the 18th regiment, two of the 65th, and 460 marines. British letters, in Peter Force's "American Archives", IV, ii, 441, give to Gage "four thousand" and "not four thousand."

Other regiments had been ordered to join Gage, and even three new generals as well; but he was expected to begin to subdue the country with the force that he had in hand. For Dartmouth wrote to Gage on the 27th of January, "the violence committed by those, who have taken up arms in Massachusetts, have appeared to me as the acts of a rude rabble, without plan, without concert, without conduct; and therefore I think that a small force now, if put to the test, would be able to conquer them, with greater probability of success, than might be expected of a larger army, if the people should be suffered to form themselves upon a more regular plan." [1]

The violences that Dartmouth referred to were the gatherings of bodies of the country people, sometimes thousands strong, who, acting usually without arms, had demanded and secured the resignations of many of the judges, councillors, and other officials appointed under the new acts. Under the supposition that these men had no idea of military procedure, the ministry strongly hinted that Gage should begin action with his small force, doubtless having in mind the utterance which he had long repented of, that if the government but took the resolute part, the Americans would prove very meek.

It was to the king that Gage had uttered that boast, with a result that he had not foreseen. Some twelve years later Haldimand, Gage's second in command, being in London, learned the inner story, and wrote in his diary under date of January 17, 1786, "When General Paterson set out for Boston he had express orders from the minister to report the state of things. He did so without reserve.

[1] "England and America", volume for 1775–1776, Bancroft Transcripts, New York Public Library. The letter as given in Sparks' "Writings of Washington", III, 507–508, is fragmentary, and does not contain this passage.

The letter was shown to the King, who, preoccupied with what General Gage had told him, paid no attention to that letter, saying that Mr. Gage having spent so long a time in America must know that country and the character of its inhabitants better than General Paterson." [1] And so the "mild general", as the king later came to call Gage, was caught in a net of his own making.

[1] Private Diary of General Haldimand, Canadian Archives for 1889. The diary (written in French, but printed also with an English translation) begins in 1786, and besides this reference to affairs in Boston, contains only a statement or two as to Gage's anxiety, in 1786, as to a proposed examination of accounts, an anxiety natural to any one if called upon to explain accounts after so long a period.

IV

TO understand the American military organization, it is necessary to go back to the autumn of 1774. At that time there existed in the colony only the ancient militia, which for generations till then, and in fact for a long time afterward, consisted theoretically of all men able to bear arms.[1] It had long observed its regular

[1] See George Tolman, "The Concord Minute Man." Concord Antiquarian Society, 1901, pp. 7–8. "The 'militia', then as now, was the entire body of citizens of military age (with certain exceptions, such as clergymen and paupers, for instance). This body of militia was mustered and paraded one or more times in the year, under officers whose commissions ran in the name of the King, and were signed by the royal Governor. They were then, as now, a part of the authorized forces of the government, liable to be called out *en masse*, or by means of a draft, at the call of the constituted authorities. Many of us remember how in the late Civil War, a draft was made from the militia of the United States, to fill up the depleted army. The same process of drafting from the militia had been followed in the various Indian wars of the colony, and later, in the Province wars of the eighteenth century. The custom of mustering the militia annually or semiannually continued until about half a century ago, until it became an object of popular ridicule and degenerated simply to burlesque, when it was very properly discontinued. I remember in my boyhood that the walls of my grandfather's shop were papered with citations, calling him and his workmen and apprentices to military duty. He was merely a militiaman, and *his* citations called upon him as 'being duly *enrolled* . . . to appear armed and equipped', while Clark Munroe, who worked for him, being a member of the Light Infantry, a 'chartered company', was cited as 'duly *enlisted* . . . to appear armed, equipped, and uniformed.'"

In 1774 trainings were more frequent than annually. Lord Percy wrote on the 12th September, "They are, moreover, trained four times a year." He may have referred to battalion or regimental musters, because on account of the growing state of feeling, company trainings became more frequent still. (See "Letters of Hugh, Earl Percy", p. 38.)

Apropos of the ridicule of the Massachusetts militia of the mid-nineteenth century, there is a story that a Concord company was nicknamed the "shad company", because on one of the muster days its captain, having forgotten the event, drove into town selling shad.

training days, dignified by sermons and mellowed in the evenings by decorous conviviality. The militia of New England had done its haphazard share in the French and Indian wars, often with loss and not infrequently with credit. The men had shown a military spirit out of all proportion to their experience. Dieskau, captured at Lake George by the New Englanders in 1755, said of them that in the morning they fought like good boys, at noon like men, and in the afternoon like devils.[1] There was so much similar evidence that the members of Parliament who openly called the New Englanders cowards, should at least have suspected them of possessing their proper share of the spirit of their race.

It was said by Warren after the fighting began, that not fifty men in the colony had expected it.[2] Though the figures seem impossibly small, there is much evidence to show that each side expected the other to give way. On the one hand the Tories credited the Whigs with an undue gift of what has been called the better part of valor, and this in spite of individual knowledge to the contrary. "There goes one," said Tory Daniel Bliss of his Whig brother, "who will fight you in blood up to his knees." [3] And another Tory said of Prescott, his brother-in-law, when through Gage's glass he recognized him leisurely walking on the parapet at Bunker's Hill, "he

[1] C. van Rensselaer, "Historical Discourse," Philadelphia, 1856. George Bancroft says of this battle, "For five hours the New England people, under their own officers, good marksmen and taking sight, kept up the most violent fire that had as yet been known in America." "History of United States", IV, 211.

[2] Warren to Arthur Lee, May 15, 1775. Richard Frothingham's "Life of Joseph Warren", p. 486.

[3] George Tolman, "John Jack the Slave and Daniel Bliss the Tory." Concord Antiquarian Society, p. 12. Also Lemuel Shattuck's "History of Concord", p. 96.

will fight you to the gates of hell." [1] But in spite of such personal examples, the Tories expected that when it came to the pinch, the Americans would yield. On the other hand, the colonists had so constantly, in years past, been able to carry their point against the home government, that they expected once more to succeed without bloodshed.

But as is so often the case, both sides marched blindly toward war. Boston was filling up with troops. To meet the situation, the provincials felt that they needed a central organization of their own. It is true that the militia was amazingly ready and mobile. When on the first day of September the news went out that Gage had seized the powder of the province, some twenty thousand men put themselves in motion. The nearer population marched on Cambridge without arms; the further, hearing that blood had been shed, came with their muskets. In Connecticut Israel Putnam called out the militia. The action of the people, marching in companies, standing in order, obeying their chosen leaders, passing resolutions against mob violence, and securing the resignations of crown officials, might have shown Lord Dartmouth that they already had some knowledge of military discipline. But they wanted their power strengthened and consolidated.

By a misstep, Gage gave them the opportunity that they needed. He issued writs for elections to a Massachusetts assembly, and though he afterward endeavored to recall them, it was too late. Protesting against the recall, the towns elected delegates, with full knowledge of

[1] This is Lorenzo Sabine's version. ("American Loyalists", p. 706.) Frothingham ("Siege of Boston", p. 126) more soberly says, "He will fight you as long as there is a drop of blood left in his veins."

what was to happen, as is shown by the instructions of the town of Roxbury to its delegate, Captain William Heath, whom we shall see later in other capacities. "We do hereby Instruct you, that in all your doings, as a Member of the House of Representatives, you adhere firmly to the Charter of this Province. . . . And [as] we have reason to believe that a Conscientious discharge of your duty, will produce your Dissolution as a House of Representatives, we do hereby Impower and Instruct you to join with the Members who may be sent from this and other Towns in the Province; and to meet with them, at a time to be agreed upon, in a General Provintial Congress."[1]

In spite of Gage's warning the Assembly met, organized, agreed upon protests against his action, and dissolved, only to meet again in October at Concord, with larger numbers, and with the same officers under different titles. He had given them the semblance of legality that they needed; and the First Provincial Congress held its meetings, and in course of time became the Second and then the Third Provincial Congress, with enough charter sanction to satisfy the people, however unsatisfactory the proceeding might be to the officers of the crown. Throughout the winter Massachusetts managed itself without governor or courts, under such guidance as it drew from this congress, exercised through the committees of safety and the selectmen of the towns.

The semblance of legality that the congress could claim scarcely extended to its actions in collecting the public money into its own treasury, and in organizing and proceeding to arm the militia. The resolves and votes of the congresses, though diligently collected at a later date, are still fragmentary; but enough exists to make

[1] Heath Papers (Massachusetts Historical Society), I, p. 18, no. 2.

clear the organization that was erected. After a week of the work of two committees, of both of which Heath was a member, on October 26 the congress ordered that there should be a committee of safety (its members as yet unnamed) which should buy some twenty thousand pounds' worth of arms and ammunition, and reorganize the militia.[1]

The latter process was somewhat complicated. The existing companies of militia were required to complete their organization of officers, who should proceed to elect field officers for their regiments. These were then forthwith to endeavor to enlist a new force, consisting of at least one quarter of the number of the original companies, having each at least fifty privates, who should elect their officers. Every nine of these new companies, grouping themselves by a means not stated but doubtless much in accordance with the previous regimental organization, were to form a battalion, of which the company officers were to elect the field officers. This second force was to "equip and hold itself in readiness, at the shortest notice from the committee of safety, to march to the place of rendezvous."

Here we have evidently the origin of the Minutemen, though the name was not used in connection with them until the 24th of November.[2] They were still, and will

[1] See for this paragraph and the succeeding, the "Journals of Each Provincial Congress", as far as page 33. Except in special cases, text references to the acts of the congresses are to be looked up under their dates in that volume, which also covers the proceedings of the Committee of Safety.

[2] The origin of the term is claimed for William Henshaw, of Leicester in Worcester County, and the first official use of it is in connection with "the petition of the officers of the minute men, in the northwest part of the county of Worcester", of Nov. 24, 1774. "Journals of the Congress", p. 50. See also 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, xv, 65*ff*.

here be spoken of as, a part of the militia; in his sermon at the muster of March 13, William Emerson addressed them as the "detached Parties." Their organization was surrounded with careful legal safeguards to keep them a civilian institution, for they were subject to the call and dismissal of the Committee of Safety, to whom also their generals, when appointed, owed their tenure of active service—a military weakness. Complete as this plan was, it was yet no new thing in Massachusetts history, for as far back as Philip's War in 1675 the Suffolk and Middlesex regiments held themselves ready to march "on a moments warning"; and through the Indian wars, until 1760, there had been bands known as "Alarm Lists", ready for service at the same short notice.[1] Indeed, for a time the same term would seem to have been applied to the new force of 1774, for in the following January a call for the election of field officers of the first Suffolk regiment speaks of it as "belonging to the Alarm list." But the name Minutemen soon so completely usurped the old one that by the time fighting broke out the alarm list had come to include only the older and more inactive men, who were organized into alarm companies belonging to the militia battalions.[2]

The actual formation of the minutemen was slow, as the Suffolk call shows, or as we can read in the roll of Concord enlistments. "Concord, January, 17th, 1775, then we chose our officers and settled the Company of Minute Men

[1] S. A. Green in 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XII, 76.

[2] The call for the Suffolk meeting is in Chamberlain papers, B. 12. 51 (Boston Public Library.) As to the alarm list, see later in this text the description of the alarm company at Concord on the Nineteenth. Gordon says in his Letter, "the alarm men (consisting of the aged and others exempted from turning out, except upon an alarm)." The alarm companies had no regimental organization.

under the command of Captain Charles Miles." [1] Yet even before the organization was completed, drill began, for that was possible in a winter that was the mildest within memory. In his diary William Emerson wrote, under January, 1775, "Extraordinary Weather. The month past 100 Min Men und[r] Arms. . . . [illegible] . . . y[e] Season so remark moderate. A multiplicity of Town Meetings, Trainings, & other meetings of va-[rious] kinds." [2] Much interest was shown in perfecting the drill, or as they called it in those days, the discipline, of the militia.

Toward this end the Provincial Congress took early steps. At the time that the new organization was resolved upon, the Congress voted, "If any of the said inhabitants are not provided with arms and ammunition, according to law,[3] that they immediately provide themselves therewith, and that they use their utmost diligence to perfect themselves in military skill." This presupposes that if a man were not in the minutemen, he was at least in the militia, and relies upon the old law that every man should

[1] Tolman, "The Concord Minute Man", p. 14.

[2] William Emerson's MS. diary, in possession of Doctor Edward W. Emerson, Concord, Mass.

[3] Percy wrote, Sept. 12, 1774, "What makes an insurrection here more formidable than in other places, is that there is a law of this Province, wh obliges every inhabitant to be furnished with a firelock, bayonet, & pretty considerable quantity of ammunition." (Percy's "Letters", p. 38.) See Robert Pierpont's amusing pretence to Gage, that the law of the province made it legal for him to smuggle ammunition out of Boston. (Samuel Adams papers, New York Public Library; date of March 20, 1775.) There was apparently a similar law in Connecticut, for it was appealed to to save the life of Amos Doolittle the engraver, when at the time of the British incursion upon New Haven his gun and accoutrements, with which he had been resisting the advance of the enemy, were found under his bed. This was July 5, 1779. (See J. W. Barber's "History of Connecticut", p. 173.) Doolittle will be mentioned later in the text, as providing contemporary evidence for the Nineteenth of April.

have arms. The Congress further called upon the towns to provide themselves with "the full town stock of arms and ammunition, according to law."

But, in the first place, arms were not easily to be come by. Without doubt the market even of the raw materials had been tightened, and as the Congress in its resolve of February 7 is seen withholding from the British army all supplies, even iron, so Gage was keeping to himself anything that might give aid and comfort to his prospective enemies. It was of course this difficulty in procuring a serviceable gun that led the dull Ditson, of Billerica, to try to buy one from a British sergeant in Boston, an attempt which led to the tarring and feathering of that countryman, already mentioned. The Provincial Congress, aware of the shortage, voted on the eighth of December that it "do recommend the making of gun-locks, and furniture, and other articles in the iron way." It should be remembered, then, that one of the anxieties of every citizen was to get a good gun and keep it in repair.

The local authorities did their best to boycott the army. In a list of Boston smiths in the papers of the committee of correspondence, most of them are recorded as having promised to desist from work, but one gunsmith was "incorrigible", and one "would give no definitive answer. A vote obtained unanimous that he desist working. . . . Passed a vote that every Carter Bringing Certain inumerated Articles be obliged to produce a certificate agreeable to the draught prescribed. . . . Voted that the Committee of Boston keep a watchfull eye over any Suspected persons to inform if they work for the army." [1]

[1] Proceedings Boston Committee of Correspondence, February 24, 1775. MSS. room in N. Y. Public Library.

It was as hard to get powder as arms. Since summer both British and provincials had been seizing all the available stocks. Warned by the action of the Massachusetts towns in withdrawing their powder from the provincial magazine, Gage sent a force to Cambridge on the first of September, and secured the remainder. The indignant people rose in the Powder Alarm, already described; Israel Putnam, turning back with the Connecticut men from their march on Boston, since he was assured that no blood had been shed, wrote, "We much desire you to keep a strict guard over the remainder of your powder; for that must be the great means, under God, for the salvation of our country." [1] Putnam had a prophetic sense: on the seventeenth of June following he and William Prescott, commanding at Bunker Hill, would have given their farms for a quarter of the supply of powder that Gage had seized.[2]

In New Hampshire, in December, the Whigs seized the public supply of powder by force from an impotent governor. It did Wentworth no good to get from Jonathan Sewall his opinion that the act was high treason, and to ask two regiments of Gage.[3] No troops could be spared him, and Wentworth had to remove himself to Boston. Gage may have felt himself lucky to be able to send a detachment of troops by sea to Rhode Island in order to secure the powder on a supply ship.[4] From under his eyes in Boston, from the very guard of his sentries, the Whigs stole cannon and smuggled cartridges out of Bos-

[1] Sir George Otto Trevelyan, "American Revolution", Part 1, p. 289.

[2] This point is brought out in the lectures (unpublished) of E. W. McGlenen.

[3] "America", 1775, 117*ff*. (Bancroft Transcripts, MSS. room, N. Y. Public Library.)

[4] Barker's "The British in Boston", pp. 13 and 23.

ton.[1] But the total of their supplies thus gained was small. The Congress found itself reduced to recommending the making of saltpeter, the repairing of the ruins of old powder mills and the erection of others, thus encouraging "the renewing of said business as soon as possible." [2]

[1] For one case of the stealing of cannon, see "William Dawes and his Ride with Paul Revere", pp. 26–27, 33–34. For the smuggling of powder out of Boston see Andrews Letters under date of March 18, 1775. "Have seen twenty load covered with dung go out of town myself, but lately all carts have been searched by the guards, and unluckily last Saturday evening a load of cartridges were seized pack'd in candle boxes, consisting of 13500 besides 4 boxes balls. The countryman struggled hard before he would deliver 'em, and received two or three bad wounds." Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, 1864–1865, p. 401. This same affair is described in the statement by Robert Pierpont, who had already "carried out of town about Forty load, this winter past", and who gives an amusing account of his interview with Gage. (Samuel Adams Papers, MSS. Division, N. Y. Public Library, under date of March 20, 1775.)

[2] "Journals of Each Provincial Congress", December 8, 1774. The provincial efforts to get powder extended further than is generally known. In the Historical Society of Philadelphia (catalogued as Massachusetts Papers, Case 7, Third Floor MSS.) are copies of letters on the subject, and especially one of February 15, 1775, from Joseph Gardoqui and Sons of Bilboa, Spain, to Jeremiah Lee of Marblehead, explaining the difficulty of getting powder and arms in Spain, but offering to forward them from Holland. In these letters are to be found the usual injunctions as to secrecy.

V

THE deficiency in powder has its bearing upon the important question of the marksmanship of the Americans. Every narrative of the fighting on the Nineteenth of April speaks of the superior shooting of the provincials, with the easy assumption that as a body they were marksmen. Study of the casualties of that long retreat shows that superior as they may have been to the British, marksmen they were not. If every American who fired at the redcoats on that day had inflicted a single serious wound, not one of either Smith's or Percy's men would have limped across Charlestown Neck that night. This will be shown when we come to a study of the fighting itself. But speaking generally, and looking at the case with the local circumstances in mind, there was no reason why, beyond a certain outdoors tradition and love of handling a gun, the provincials should have been as good shots as their ancestors.

In the first place, the only men who were able to get a shot at the British on that day were men of eastern Massachusetts, very few of whom had ever had a chance at big game. It is true that game was seen from time to time, as is shown by the fact that just about this period a cow moose was shot in Connecticut. But that the animal was unrecognized, and was described in the newspapers as a kind of prodigy, is proof of the unusualness of the occurrence.[1] The country in eastern Massachusetts was no

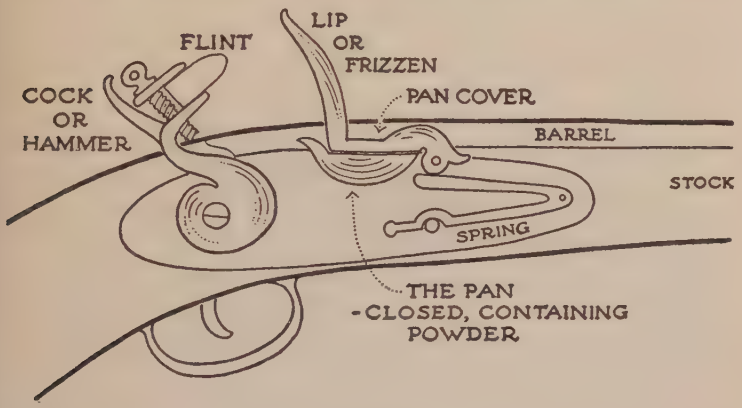
[1] My reference to this is mislaid. The incident means no more than does the fact that in January, 1924, a doe was seen in Main Street, Concord, and that in June of the same year a fawn broke a plate-glass window in Worcester. In both places deer are extremely unusual.

more wooded than it is to-day, while the lack of game laws makes it seem more than likely that even deer were rare. The farmers of that day used their smoothbores as fowling pieces. Had they shot at deer they would have used buckshot—and that is a very different matter from using bullets at a considerable range.

And in the second place, only exceptional men are natural marksmen, while even they need frequent practice. Any man with experience in our recent War, whether in the regular army or some force of home guards, learned how much range firing is needed to make a good shot out of a civilian, even though he be, as most Americans are, familiar with the mechanism of a gun. A mere occasional field day, with a chance of ten or twenty shots at a target, can do no more than show a man the difficulty of the art. If studied as a science, rifle-shooting needs mastery of the trigger-squeeze, of sighting, of estimating the range, of wind, of mirage. This refers to the use of our modern rifle, an instrument of precision, which if held "on" the target at the instant of a proper trigger-pull will put the bullet on its way to the mark long before the recoil can derange the aim. But the firelock of 1775 had a slow hammer that by means of a flint ignited the powder in the pan, a slow flash that set off (in most cases) the powder in the barrel, a slow-burning powder that sent a slow bullet along a heavily dropping trajectory. The aim with a flintlock needed therefore to be held steadily and long. There was in addition probably not a rifled weapon in Massachusetts, except the imported gun of a sportsman or the duelling pistol of some officer.[1] Further, there was

[1] The action of the flintlock gun, used in warfare for over a century, was as follows. A hammer holding a flint was snapped forward against a steel from which it struck sparks. This steel was a part of the cover of a "pan" holding a

no absolute uniformity of either powder or bullets. Even under the best conditions, therefore, much shooting was necessarily haphazard, except in the case of men who knew their individual guns, trimmed their rough-cast bullets with care, made their cartridges or loaded their guns al-



ways exactly alike, and, finally, were able to do enough practice shooting to teach them how to use the gun under varying conditions.

But the average man in those last few months of prepa-

few pinches of powder. The angle of the blow of the flint forcing open the pan, the sparks would ignite the powder. The flash entering by a touchhole into the barrel of the gun, would ignite the charge. If the flint failed to spark, or if the powder in the pan had become wet, or if the touchhole were clogged, the gun would fail to fire.

A proper flint had sharp or jagged edges. When these were rounded by friction, the flint would no longer spark. Then it had to be made rough by "picking" or "knapping", or else had to be replaced.

A rifle is a gun of which the barrel is bored with spiral grooves. These, giving a twist or spin to the bullet, make it fly true. If the bullet fits them closely, there is less escape of gas, and the range is longer. Even in European armies, there were comparatively few rifles in use in 1775, though Saxe advocated the use of the "rifled fusee"; and in Massachusetts practically none were used, whether by the regulars or the provincials.

ration was denied the chance to perfect himself in shooting. Let him have a good gun, let him have ever so good a will in making his cartridges properly—but when once made the cartridges stayed in their box, and the gun hung on the wall, except when taken down for use in drill. For powder was too precious to be wasted. Speaking

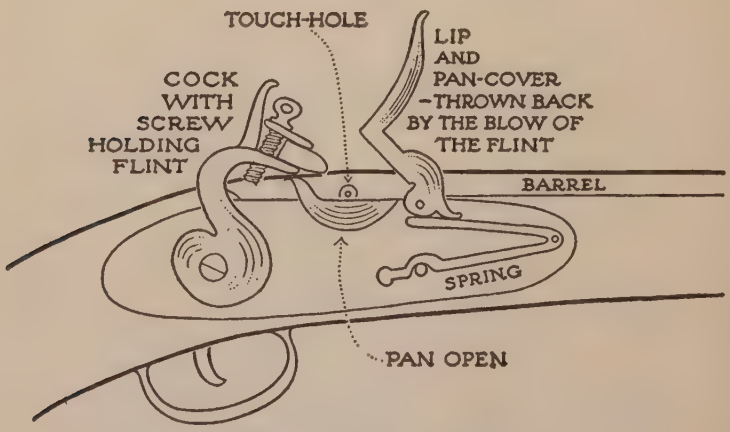


DIAGRAM OF FLINTLOCK AFTER FIRING

of the militia, and even of the minute men as a whole, the chief practice that they could indulge in was snapping the flintlocks upon the empty barrels on the village green.

It is true, of course, that potentially the American was a better shot than the Briton who was to oppose him. Taken from a handicraft or from the plough, the British recruit had neither knowledge of nor interest in the use of a gun, unless he had once been either a gamekeeper or a poacher. On the other hand, every Yankee knew the stories of the fights of his ancestors with the Indians, if

indeed he had not himself been in the fighting, the last of which had taken place but fifteen years before. There were in Massachusetts some of the older men who had been at the taking of Louisburg in 1745, and a good sprinkling of men in their early forties who had been at the battles around Lake George. Small as was the proportion of these men in the population as a whole, and remote as was the time when every man could kill his own meat at the cost of a little hunting, there survived in the province the tradition of frontier life, and a genuine contempt for the methods of the regulars.

The British army was thoroughly Europeanized, for on the continent had been its chief battles; and Wolfe and Howe, the only leaders besides Sir Jeffrey Amherst who had both genius and an understanding of frontier methods, died too early to effect a change in its tactics. The regular army had therefore absorbed or imitated the French or Prussian drill, and trained its battalions to attack in an extended front of men three deep, with volley firing by platoons in regular sequence, commonly beginning at a range too great for effectiveness. Such was the method of the first two British attacks at Bunker Hill.[1] But the general weakness of such volley firing was already clearly recognized by all students of the writings of Marshal Saxe, among whom it was held to be a good principle to reserve the fire until the last possible instant before charging.[2] This theory was absorbed by some of

[1] This was in spite of Wolfe's advice that troops should attack an intrenchment "not in a line, but in small firing columns of three or four platoons in depth, with small parties between each column, who are to fire at the top of the parapet." The final attack at Bunker Hill was in column and succeeded.

[2] On the effectiveness of eighteenth-century musket fire see the "Reveries" of Marshal Saxe, Edinburgh, 1759, pp. 28–30; this is quoted in part in Timothy Pickering's "Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia", pp. 126–128. See also the

the American drill masters, who would add a military as well as a political reason to the general practice of exhorting their men to wait for the British fire. For politically, as even the youngest knew, they would not then be aggressors in a civil war. And tactically the risk would be well repaid, as we shall see at Concord bridge.

It is true that there had lately been a change toward common sense in the tactics of the British infantry. In Bland's "Treatise on Military Discipline", which up to 1753 had been the drill book for the army, the manual of loading and firing showed a hopeless formalism. For loading the officers gave sixteen orders, followed by the privates in a series of forty-nine motions, showing the ideal of the martinet of those days. At that time the soldier did not aim, he "presented" his piece: squared his body to the enemy, held his head upright, and having the butt of his gun in the hollow of his shoulder, pointed the barrel straight in front of him, but inclined a little downward, so that, in case the bullet sped directly at a man in front and not too far away, it would strike him in the middle. Soldiers were expected to hold their guns in this position until their officer was satisfied that they had correctly "levelled", when he gave the word "Fire!" and they pulled their "trickers." [1]

But even though in 1764 a simpler manual had been adopted, with marked improvement in simplicity of drill, it was still cumbersome. For the ordinary priming and loading eight orders were given, to be executed in

"British Military Library, or Journal", London, 1799, pp. 180–181. ("It is generally supposed that, upon an average, every hundredth ball only does execution.") Algarotti's "Letters", London, 1783, p. 298; William Thomson's "Military Memoirs", London, 1804, p. 464; Duane's "Military Dictionary", Philadelphia, 1810.

[1] Bland's "Treatise on Military Discipline", edition of 1753.

twelve movements. Simplicity had been gained in part by priming the gun not from a horn, but from the bitten cartridge. And for emergencies, at the single order "Prime and Load!" the men were taught to do the manœuver in fifteen motions. But one questions how much the emergency was prepared for, or how much, on the other hand, the parade-ground type of officer insisted on the longer method, with the "one, two" counted between the motions. Such a question touches a vital matter when it comes to the question of aiming, of which the book gives two methods. At "Present!" the soldier was to "Step back about six inches with the Right Foot, bringing the Left Toe to the Front; at the same Time the Butt-End of the Firelock must be brought to an equal Height with your Shoulder, placing the Left-Hand on the Swell, and the Fore-Finger of the Right-Hand before the Tricker, sinking the Muzzle a little."

This was really no better than the directions of 1753, although the head was not necessarily held upright. But further directions on another page of the manual of 1764 seems to show that the regulars were progressing in learning how to aim. "And raise up the Butt so high upon the Right Shoulder, that you may not be obliged to stoop too much with the Head, the Right Cheek to be close to the Butt, and the left Eye shut, and look along the Barrel, with the Right Eye, from the Breech Pin to the Muzzle." The formalist was allowing the head to be stooped, then, but not too much, and nothing was said of the object to be aimed at, nor of the sights—not of the rear sight, for there was none; and nothing of the front sight, though one was there.[1]

[1] Copies of the British manual of 1764 are rare. I have used the Massachusetts reprint of 1774, as ordered by the Provincial Congress. See pp. 3, 4, 5,

To a generation like ours, which studies the niceties of marksmanship, such directions seem absurd. Being intended, however, for men not above the intelligence of the English peasant of those days, they were doubtless well enough planned for their purpose. After much drill a company of these men probably learned to be quick and smart, and when they were veterans they or their European models became marvellously adept in loading and firing. The Prussians were finally drilled to shoot five times a minute, on the theory that, since the time that tried a man's nerves was when his gun was unloaded, he was the steadier for such speed. Other armies, however, recognized the chances of misfires from undue haste, and were content, even as late as Napoleon, with two or three rounds a minute.[1] One might remark that those old soldiers might well learn to fire fast if they spent no time in aiming.

It was this last consideration that struck the provincials of 1774, this and our national disinclination to the niceties of show. Practically considering that the simpler the drill, the quicker a man could learn efficiency, certain "officers of the minute men, in the north-west part of the county of Worcester", petitioned on November 24th that the Provincial Congress should establish the military drill called the "Norfolk Exercise", which was apparently a simpler manual.[2] But native genius had still further

11, 12. The same directions are to be found in "The Military Guide for Young Officers", by Thomas Simes, Philadelphia, 1776.

[1] Lloyd's "History of Infantry ", pp. 154–155. Encyclopedia Britannica, ed. of 1911, article "Infantry." Saxe wrote ("Reveries ", p. 100); "one can fire six times in a minute with ease; nevertheless, I shall only say four."

[2] I have been unable to find a copy of this Norfolk Exercise. Timothy Pickering describes it in his preface. For the proceedings of the Congress, see the journals under the dates given.

suggestions, and on the 9th of December the Congress appointed a committee (on which we see once more the useful William Heath, now Colonel) "to consider a plan of military exercise, proposed by Capt. Timothy Pickering, Jr." Pickering is a man who in his time filled many parts, a born controversialist ready with his pen, of whom like Heath we shall see more. The plan he proposed was doubtless his "Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia", published in Salem in 1775.

The book followed, in many respects, the old tactics of Bland and others, quotes them and Saxe, and gives evidence of much book study. The latest method was used in priming from the bitten cartridge.[1] No parade-ground methods of loading were used: the men primed and loaded in ten motions, from a single order. What is more, here appears in print the result of generations of frontier warfare, in teaching the men to aim. "Lean the cheek against the butt of the firelock, shut the left eye, and look with the right along the barrel, from the breech-pin to the sight near the muzzle, at the object you would hit; or, in other words (to use the well-known phrase) *take good sight.*" [2]

Here is seen the great difference between the British and the American idea of shooting. Lacking opportunity

[1] The reader understands, it is to be hoped, that the cartridge of those days was made of a bullet and the requisite amount of powder, rolled together in paper into a cylinder small enough to enter, powder end first, into the barrel of the gun when fouled with shooting. If just snug enough to enter a clean barrel, the cartridges would soon be useless. In earlier days the cartridges contained powder alone; now they contained both powder and ball, and were used in the following manner. Holding the cartridge by the bullet end, the paper of the other end was bitten open, and a proper quantity was shaken into the pan of the gun, which was then closed. The rest of the powder was poured down the barrel and the bullet and paper stuffed in after it and rammed home.

[2] Pickering's "Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia", p. 21.

for practice, the American was no marksman, but he was on the way to be. We know from Lieutenant Barker's diary that the regulars had their rare field days at target practice. Without such opportunities the provincial could not be the expert with the gun that history would make him; but in spite of his lack of training the American was, because of his traditions and his cast of mind, potentially the more dangerous man with a gun.[1]

[1] Barker's "The British in Boston", entry for December 9, 1774, p. 9. There are very few such entries. Andrews, while implying some frequency of practice, ridicules the British shooting. (Massachusetts Historical Society's Proceedings for July, 1865, p. 371.)

Note on the Slow Fire of the Flintlock. It would be hard to find today a man who has habitually used the flintlock as a practical tool, but I have come across a memorandum, made in 1898, of a description given me by my French Canadian guide, who in his boyhood had been entrusted with the family weapon, an ancestral flintlock.

"I didn' like 'im. Firs' 'e strike, then 'e flash, then 'e go—clow! bzz! po-o-w! Shoot like a cannon, but awful slow. I tol' my farzer 'e shoot three time with new gun while 'e shoot once with old, so 'e give 'im up."

Anyone can see the necessity of a long and steady aim with a gun that took so long in going off.

VI

THE events of the winter, political or military or social, were only such as could impress on the Americans the increasing unlikelihood of any agreement with Great Britain. In social matters the line between the Tories and the troops on one side, and the Whigs on the other, was more sharply drawn, with irritations which tended to make every utterance of opinion a personal affair. While it goes without saying that the better type of British officer scrupulously refrained from acts that would exasperate his opponents, it required only a few of the opposite type to keep resentment alive. It did not conduce to good feeling when the drums and fifes of the King's Own regiment, under the supervision of their officers,[1] interrupted the religious services appointed by the Provincial Congress. In small personal affairs the Whig leaders, and especially Joseph Warren, came in for undesirable attention.

Warren was a Boston physician, a member of the Committee of Safety, and a man of pleasing personality and fiery enthusiasm, the type of New Englander who in every generation has been ready to sacrifice all to an ideal. "If Warren were not a Whig," said a Tory physician, "he might soon be independent, and ride in his chariot." [2] Samuel Adams has been called a politician, Hancock a self-seeker; but nothing worse has ever been brought against Warren than that he spoke and wrote in the high-flown language common in that day. It is

[1] Trevelyan says their colonel. "American Revolution", Part 1, p. 297.

[2] Quoted in Richard Frothingham's "Life of Warren", p. 16. But the quotation is not in Eliot's "Biographical Dictionary", to which Frothingham refers it.

true that the rhetoric of his speech upon the anniversary of the Boston Massacre, on March 6, 1775,[1] was flowery and extreme; but it should also be remembered that he who spoke it had the courage of his beliefs, for he had reason enough to expect to be arrested by the officers who crowded below the pulpit in which he stood. There was a tense moment when the drums and fifes of a detachment of troops was heard passing by.[2] The officers in the church contented themselves with hisses, interruptions, and cries of "Fie!" which being taken for a cry of fire, caused some disturbance. "It was imagined there wou'd have been a riot," wrote Lieutenant Barker, "which if there had wou'd in all probability have proved fatal to Hancock, Adams, Warren, and the rest of those Villains, as they were all up in the pulpit together, and the meeting was crowded with Officers and Seamen in such a manner that they cou'd not have escaped; however it luckily did not turn out so, it wou'd indeed have been a pity for them to have made their exit in that way, as I hope we shall have the pleasure before long of seeing them do it by the hands of the Hangman." [3] A few days later the officers publicly parodied the occasion, and circulated their literary effort in a pamphlet.[4]

Because of his prominence, and because, unlike Hancock and Adams, his business kept him in Boston up to the last moment before the fighting, Warren was a marked man among the officers. Walking one day on the Neck toward the place where the gallows stood, he was passed

[1] The Massacre was on the fifth of March, but in 1775 the anniversary fell upon a Sunday.

[2] James T. Austin's "Life of Elbridge Gerry", p. 85.

[3] "The British in Boston", p. 26.

[4] Andrews, "Letters", Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, July, 1865, p. 400. See also Frothingham's "Life of Warren", p. 446.

Doctor Joseph Warren.
In his later uniform as General.

by three, one of whom said, "Go on, Warren: you will soon come to the gallows." When he demanded which had made the speech, none of them would avow it. Warren was deeply resentful of the frequent imputations of American cowardice, and said to his assistant, "Those fellows say we won't fight; by Heavens, I hope to die up to my knees in blood!" [1] How gallantly he fulfilled his wish may be read in the story of Bunker Hill. Meanwhile, all such little irritations tended to make the breach more difficult to heal.

During the winter there were a few military "excursions" by the garrison. One was the attempt, in February, to seize the cannon hidden at Salem by the Whigs; it had a military purpose and was frustrated. The other occasions were to give exercise to the troops cooped up in the town. Issuing by the Charlestown ferry, they would march round to the Neck at Roxbury; or leaving by Roxbury, they make a circuit in the near-by country and return. Each time the news was instantly spread, and the troops were the objects of the closest attention until the harmlessness of their expedition was made clear. On February 10 the Provincial Congress interrupted its morning session to appoint a committee "to observe the motions of the troops said to be on their way to this town"; but as the business of the day proceeded, it was doubtless found that no harm was intended.

More disturbance was caused on the 30th of March, when Lord Percy led out the first brigade, the very troops who twenty days later hastened to the relief of the detachment sent to Concord. The younger officers were amused by the disturbance they caused among the rustics. Lieutenant Barker wrote, "Expresses were sent to every

[1] Richard Frothingham's "Life of Warren", p. 452.

town near: at Watertown about 9 miles off, they got 2 pieces of Cannon to the Bridge and loaded 'em but nobody wou'd stay to fire them; at Cambridge they were so alarmed that they pulled up the Bridge. However they were quit for their fears, for after marching about the Country for five hours we returned peaceably home." [1] American reports naturally looked at the matter from another angle. "Five regiments marched out with Lord Percy at their head. . . . The troops. . . marched over the people's land—some where their grain was sown—and gardens; broke down the fences, walls, &c." The statement is mild compared with the hot protest immediately sent to the Congress by the Boston committee of correspondence,[2] complaining of the "wanton cruelty and mischief" committed by the "little malignant Hearts" of the "Savage Soldiers." The destruction of property probably seemed nothing more serious, to Percy, than the casual injury he inflicted on farms in the old country when he chose to go fox-hunting. He had yet to learn that the feeling of the American farmer toward his seeded ground, his fences, and his cattle, was not the same as that of the acquiescent British peasant. But on the whole, this was only practice for both sides, with the advantage on the side of the countryman. The regular hardened his muscles; but the militiaman learned how to rouse the country, and began to suspect that there was more use to a bridge than to allow his opponent to cross it. The Cambridge bridge figures twice in the story of the Nineteenth of April.

[1] "The British in Boston", p. 27.

[2] See Peter Force's "American Archives", IV, ii, column 253. Also column 256. Frothingham's "Life of Warren", pp. 447–448. Papers of the Boston Committee of Correspondence, date of March 31, 1775, MSS. division, New York Public Library.

Meanwhile these expeditions had given the Provincial Congress food for thought. If the Whig leaders were alarmed at these appearances of the troops, it was largely because they knew how precious were the few military stores they had with such difficulty assembled. They foresaw that they might have to fight to keep them, and prepared to do so. On this same 30th of March the Congress,[1] sitting at Concord, after stating grievances and the evident preparations of the British to enforce the acts of Parliament, passed the following resolve: "That whenever the Army under command of General Gage, or any part thereof to the Number of Five Hundred, shall march out of the Town of Boston, with Artillery and Baggage, it ought to be deemed a design to carry into execution by Force the late acts of Parliament, the attempting which, by the Resolve of the late Honorable Continental Congress, ought to be opposed; and therefore the Military Force of the Province ought to be assembled, and an Army of Observation immediately formed, to act solely on the defensive so long as it can be justified on the Principles of Reason and Self Preservation and [no?] longer." [2]

Thus a double legal standing, from the Continental

[1] Apparently the action of the Congress was not a result of that day's expedition, for though the troops marched out early (at "six in the morning", says Barker) Concord was twenty miles away, and the resolution, evidently from a prepared report, was passed at the morning session. Nor does it seem to be true, as Gordon stated, that this expedition prevented an adjournment of the Congress, for it yet had several days' business before it.

[2] This resolve is found in the Heath papers (Massachusetts Historical Society's cabinets, Vol. 1, p. 19, no. 6) apparently in the shape of a copy of the resolves given to Heath as general, to guide him in emergency. In the proceedings of the Congress ("Journals", p. 112) it is merely stated that the committee on the state of the province reported a resolve of this general nature, which was read and considered in paragraphs, and passed unanimously in the affirmative.

Congress as well as the Provincial, was given in advance to the men who turned out nearly three weeks later. They were an Army of Observation until the British guns should speak.

Other preparations were also made. William Heath, whose activities we have been observing, was appointed general, the junior of five, but, as it happened, the only one to be on hand in the first day of the fighting. And in early April a remarkable step was taken in the decision that the militia of a single province being insufficient to cope with the situation, an army should be immediately raised and established, by contingents not only from Massachusetts but from the three neighboring colonies as well, to whom delegates were to be sent to begin negotiations to this end.[1] The proposal was a notable one; it seems to contemplate supplementing the militia and even the minutemen by a force of men actually under arms, a thing which would have materially changed the situation. As it turned out, the proposed negotiations were not actively undertaken until after the Nineteenth. But meanwhile the militia of Massachusetts, in the approach of that early spring, were industriously drilling.

There comes out of the literature of those times a significant contrast between a military muster of the days of peace and those of impending war. In 1769 Timothy Pickering, Junior, then a militia lieutenant, but already a reformer, published two letters ostensibly from an old man, ridiculing the musters of the day—their dilatoriness, their long midday meal, the fruitless character of their drill or exercise. In later letters also, over his own name, in one of his numerous controversies, he tells more of the subject; particularly he speaks of a

[1] "Journals of Each Provincial Congress", pp. 135*ff*.

silly habit of firing at people with blank charges, at the ground or over their heads, either in ridicule or in salute.

Did any awkward or uncommon figure of a man come in sight of these heroes, by a sudden excursion they surprised, surrounded, and for a while buried him in fire and smoke; then, with self-approving shouts, and breasts glowing with the thoughts of their valorous deeds, they made a gallant retreat, and again joined the main body. But never did these undaunted souls breathe more heroic ardor, than when some *harmless maid*, some *modest fair*, drawn by the irresistible power of curiosity to see these public *shows*, made her appearance. Then they summoned all their courage, then they exerted all their fire, to fill with alarms her tender breast.

About a year and a half ago, some strangers, one of them a woman, were passing through the town on a training-day morning just as the soldiers were assembling. They were fired at, and thereby, and by various motions and flourishes of the guns, their horses were excessively frighted, insomuch that the woman was in imminent danger of her life.[1]

Pickering set himself to do away with this nonsense, and though he had not only the soldiers but also almost the whole town on his back, in remonstrance against stopping the old custom, he recorded success. On one occasion, when a soldier in his company saluted him by firing at his feet, Pickering struck him with the flat of his sword.[2]

But whatever might be done by the young bucks of Salem in 1769, the situation was changed in 1775. Had

[1] These two quotations are from different letters, the first written as if by an old man, "A Military Citizen", and the second from Timothy Pickering's later controversy. See the "Life of Timothy Pickering", by his son, I, 17, 26, 27.

[2] *Ibid*, I, 28, *footnote*.

there then been powder to use in shooting, it would have been devoted to target practice more serious than the Salem youth fooled with six years earlier. And to see a local militia muster of the time when the great decision was about to be made, in a smaller and simpler town, let us turn to the unique narrative of Ensign Henry De Berniere, then of the light infantry company of the Tenth British Infantry.

The petulant Barker writes in his diary, January 8, 1775, "Genl. Orders. If any Officers of the different Regts. are *capable* of taking sketches of a Country, they will send their names to the Dep. Adj. Genl. That is an extraordinary method of wording the Order; it might at least have been put in a more genteel way; at present it looks as if he doubted whether there were any such." [1]

Either so far as Barker was concerned there were none such, or else perhaps his gentility was offended. At any rate, he made no application for the opportunity to assist his general, and Gage found help elsewhere. For "in the latter end of February" Ensign Henry De Berniere,[2] who was of a sturdier and more earnest type than the critical Barker, together with a Captain Brown, who for us is but a lay figure, received orders to sketch the roads and incidentally to test the political situation in Suffolk and Worcester, and later in Middlesex. In the hurried evacuation of Boston, De Berniere (like Barker

[1] "The British in Boston", p. 18.

[2] This name is spelt in various ways, with a large and small d, and as Berniere, Bernière, and Bernicre. Martin, in his "Life of Artemas Ward", gives the spelling Birniere, and of the captain's name, Browne. The original publication was in a small pamphlet, printed by Edes and Gill, Boston, in 1779 "for the information and amusement of the *curious*." This is now quite rare, and the student is referred to the reprint, 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, IV, 204–219; the narrative of the Concord expedition is printed in Charles Hudson's "History of Lexington", I, 126–127.

later in Philadelphia) left behind him the manuscript in which he recorded his experiences, and it was printed, to the enjoyment of those who like a plain tale, the author of which is not above admitting his alarm when he finds he himself in an unpleasant situation. In his account of retreat from Concord, De Berniere records no nervousness; therefore it would seem as if his mental disturbance in a less dangerous situation arose from the thought of the personal indignity which might come if he, a British officer, should be detected in the "brown cloaths and reddish handkerchief" of a Yankee rustic.

It was in Framingham that the two officers caught their glimpse of the provincial company at drill.

We arrived [wrote De Berniere] at Buckminster's tavern about six o'clock that evening, the company of militia were exercising near the house, and an hour after they came and performed their feats before the windows of the room we were in; we did not feel very easy at seeing such a number so very near us; however, they did not know who we were, and took little or no notice of us.—After they had done their exercise, one of their commanders spoke a very eloquent speech, recommending patience, coolness, and bravery, (which indeed they very much wanted) particularly told them they would always conquer if they did not break, and recommended them to charge us cooly, and wait for our fire, and everything would succeed with them—quotes Cæsar and Pompey, brigadiers Putnam and Ward, and all such great men; put them in mind of Cape Breton, and all the battles they had gained for his majesty in the last war, and observed that the regulars must have been ruined but for them.—After so learned and spirited an harangue, he dismissed the parade, and the whole company came into the house and drank until nine o'clock, and then returned to their respective homes full of pot-valour.[1]

[1] 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, IV, 209–210.

Nine o'clock, it may be observed, is a proper bedtime for those who are to begin their chores before five the next morning. The speech of the militia officer would not have seemed so ridiculous to De Berniere had he been a little better acquainted with the history of Cape Breton in 1745, and of Lake George ten years later. Indeed, had De Berniere waited three weeks before writing down his story, his fresh remembrance of the retreat from Concord to Lexington would have prevented him from casting slurs on the bravery of the men before whom "we began to run rather than retreat in order." More to the present point, however, is the fact that De Berniere had no ridicule for the drill of the militia. Had it been absurd to his soldierly eyes, he could hardly have failed to remark it.[1] It may well be believed that the spirit of the times made the earnest drill of the Framingham men an entirely different thing from the frolicking of the Salem youth in 1769, when the Stamp Act had been repealed, and before the Massacre and the Tea Party had become signs of the new political situation.

But in particular one thing is to be noted, that in Framingham, as doubtless everywhere in the province, there was no pretence that the preparation was not against the regulars. The Americans were to charge the British coolly. It had come to the point when war might begin at any time.

[1] Other colonies were drilling as well. Charles Lee had recently written, "I was present at a review in Providence in Rhode Island, and really never saw anything more perfect." (Quoted in Trevelyan's "American Revolution", Part 1, 253–254). Lee was never very sincere, but he had had military experience, and his word on the subject is better than John Andrews' innocent admiration of the Boston militia. Of these Lord Percy wrote in September, 1774 ("Letters", p. 38): "They are, moreover, trained four times in each year, so that they do not make a despicable *appearance* as soldiers, though they were never yet known to behave themselves even decently in the field."

For politically the situation had only gone from bad to worse. There was to be no repeal of the Massachusetts Acts, as there had been of the Stamp Act. In vain Chatham, Fox, and Burke, with their followers, struggled in Parliament to change the measures which were taken against the colonies; they were outvoted at every turn. The king had made up his mind, and his groups of honest, or venal, or cynical followers did his bidding, little suspecting that in England royalty was enjoying almost its last taste of real power, and that when once fighting began, everything would be changed.

The reader of the documents of the day will mark, on the American side, a contentious if not defiant attitude towards Gage as a servant of the ministry,[1] but a loyal and appealing tone toward the king. There is no reason to believe that this feeling toward the king was not genuine. Harried by the ministry, the colonists were reluctant to accept the hazard of war and especially unwilling to make the break with England, and they saw in the king their only recourse. It may be that Samuel Adams, biding his time, knew how weak was the hope that the king would intervene to help them. But among the Americans in general it seems true that they hoped for a change in policy through his means. There was no general desire for a separation. Within a few weeks before the Nineteenth of April, Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, and John Adams severally protested that there was no wish for independence.[2] The Americans waited for a change of heart in Britain.

But they waited in vain. Nothing is more significant

[1] It was the habit to speak of Gage's troops as the "ministerial army." The address of the Congress to him, October 9, 1774, approaches the impudent.

[2] Bancroft's "History of the United States", Centenary Edition, IV, 526.

of the temper of Parliament than the utterance of the majority in favor of the act which cut off the fisheries from the New Englanders. The speakers for the bill showed equal ignorance of and indifference to the needs of New England. The cowardice of the Americans was freely dwelt on.[1] The act was passed by a strong majority. The decision was expected in America, and Warren, before it had yet been declared, wrote the words, frequently quoted:

> If America is an humble instrument of the salvation of Britain, it will give us the sincerest joy; but, if Britain must lose her liberty, she must lose it alone. America must and will be free. . . . We mean not to make the [last] appeal until we can be justified in doing it in the sight of God and man. Happy shall we be if the mother-country will allow us the free enjoyment of our rights, and indulge us in the pleasing employment of aggrandizing her.[2]

The circumlocutions and metaphors of Warren's rhetoric are foreign to our day, but in reading the letters of the men of those times it must be remembered that, however high-flown their language, they meant just what they said. "The last appeal"; "jealousy that our implacable enemies are unremitting in their endeavors, by fraud and artifice as well as by open force, to subjugate this people"; "the glorious cause of American liberty"; "the ungrateful alternative of a tame submission to a state of absolute vassalage to the will of a despotic minister, or of preparing themselves speedily

[1] Reports of the debates were sent to America, and the tone of Parliament was well known in the colonies. See the letter of Richard Price to Josiah Quincy, Jr., concerning this debate, with the anecdotal charges of American cowardice at Louisburg. 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XVII, 287.

[2] Frothingham's "Life of Joseph Warren", p. 447.

to defend. . . the unalienable rights of themselves and posterity against the avowed hostility of their parent state": these are but samples, quickly and easily gathered, of the utterances of the last few months preceding the outbreak of war.[1] We should express those sentiments differently now, but they are common in human nature. Pity it is that men are so ready for war, but the Americans felt that it was being forced upon them.

And feeling so, they had learned their essential lesson. They intended not to be the aggressors. Not the men of Framingham merely, but the militia of every company in the State had been told not to fire first. They had waited for the attack in Salem in February, and it did not come. It remained their intention, no matter what the circumstances, to wait to be attacked.

[1] They are all from the "Journals of Each Provincial Congress." See pp. 54, 110, 144.

VII

WE come, after these preliminaries, which are but the sketching of the background, the setting of the stage, to a closer study of conditions immediately before the outbreak of hostilities. We know that in every town were one or more companies of militia or minutemen, often both, sometimes with an alarm company as well. The Concord, Acton, Lincoln, Bedford and Carlisle companies, the only ones that were to be called upon to act in concert on the Nineteenth, had had one field day together, in March. During April the very early spring kept every farmer busy with his plowing and sowing. The Provincial Congress had been sitting at Concord and had only lately adjourned; the Committee of Safety had also been sitting in Concord, in close consultation with Colonel James Barrett of the town, who had under his supervision all the munitions stored there. Hancock and Adams had not been in Boston for some time, but they had been in steady communication with Doctor Warren by the agency of Paul Revere, the customary bearer of important secret news, whose last trip to Lexington, to see the two leaders, was on Sunday the sixteenth of April.[1] Whig and Tory, provincial and redcoat, had been watching each other, each alert for some move of the

[1] See Paul Revere's letter. Concerning his famous ride Revere left two written statements one in form a deposition, one a letter, both undated, though the deposition (not sworn to) reads almost as of 1775, and the letter is considerably later. They are in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and have been printed in Goff's "Life of Revere." The deposition is much the shorter and relates only to the events of the ride; the letter tells of previous events in Boston and also of Church's deception.

other. But in the game of waiting and spying the adherents of the king were no match for the Yankees.

The men who loitered on street corners, idled near the fortifications on the Neck, or lingered anywhere near the troops, had a right to be where they were. For they had been out of work ever since the Port Bill went into force, because their trades were dead. Sailor or rigger or longshoreman or ropemaker, they had been idle for months, and had been maintained by gifts that had been sent in from all the other colonies. Even the men who used to pick up their living along the wharves by carrying small freight by boat, had now nothing to do, since the only boat that might ply in the harbor was the ferry to Charlestown—although some of the admiral's men might suspect that there were still hidden, here and there, boats that had not yet been seized. The carpenters of Boston had been out of work ever since they threw up their comfortable jobs of building barracks for the troops. All over Boston, therefore, men loitered day by day, fortunate in the mild weather, glad of the early spring, and willingly carrying on the unpaid, dangerous, but rather pleasant occupation of spying on the occupations of the troops, the Tories, and the governor.

These men all knew each other, and many of them knew, and were known by, the leaders of the Whigs. Between the merchants and professional men above, and the common workmen below, was a stratum of craftsmen whom it would be difficult to duplicate to-day, crushed out as that class is by modern factory competition. These were the leaders of the workmen, the right-hand men of the heads of the Whig party. Chief of them was Paul Revere, long a trusted messenger, sometimes sent as far as New York or Philadelphia; he was also an

engraver of political cartoons, a silversmith whose work is precious to this day, and a man of solid substance with a workshop and residence in the North Square.

All through the past winter Revere and about thirty others, "chiefly mechanics", as he wrote, had been on the watch, meeting privately and swearing secrecy on the Bible. Uneasy at finding that their doings were reported to the Governor, they had changed their place of meeting; and though finally convinced that some one in the Provincial Congress was regularly reporting to Gage, they had kept on with their watching. Toward spring they had taken to patrolling the streets all night in pairs, by turns, watching the movements of the soldiers. Nothing unusual was likely to escape their eyes.

There was much superficial gayety in the town. The poorer Whigs were pinched and even the well-to-do were serious, and they had no reason for concealing it. But the officials and Tories wanted to carry things well. Boston had plenty of country loyalists who, to escape from the rough, unpleasant, and sometimes even threatening attentions of their neighbors, had taken refuge with the troops. Their stories were in many cases sad ones; it is depressing to read the letters of such men as Jonathan Sewall and Richard Lechmere, deprived of their property, their occupation, and their ambitions, in the land that they loved.[1] Nothing can be said to excuse the cruel bitterness of party feeling except that Christian tolerance has always failed in civil war, and that this, with neighbors on different sides, was even more of a civil war than the struggle of eighty-five years later. But so far no blood had yet been shed in Massachusetts. Out in the country

[1] See 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, x, 412-416 and 2, xvi, 284*ff*.

the Whigs had the upper hand, and they used it exactly as the Tories would have used it if they had had the power, if we may judge by the utterances of one reverend gentleman who was cooped up with Gage.[1]

Meanwhile there was such gayety as always exists in garrison towns. Barker's diary tells of a ball, of a meeting of the Sons of Saint Andrew, of a celebration of the Queen's birthday, of the meeting of clubs (and the governor's disapproval of high play), and of another ball "by the Superior and Members of the Loyal and Friendly Society of the Blue and Orange", to which were invited the general and admiral and their ladies, and "a great number of the Gentlemen and Ladies of the town." It must have been a nervously gay little society that centered round the governor's residence, the Province House; and those who had much at stake must have been glad of its relaxations as a change from their secret apprehensions. More troops were coming, three more generals were soon to arrive, and then something would be done. So the councillors who had no official business to transact, and the judges in whose courtrooms no juries would sit, and the plain men of substance who sometimes mounted Beacon Hill to look into the distance which shrouded their pleasant homes, were serious and hopeful by turns, and command our pity as those who in life have played the losing game. Not yet lost, however. What was Gage going to do?

The question interested every one in the town. Doubt-

[1] The Reverend Samuel Peters fled from Hebron, Connecticut, to Boston. On September 28, 1774, he wrote, "Six regiments are coming over from England and sundry men of war. So soon as they come *hanging work* will go on, and *destruction* will attend first the seaport towns." "Journals of Each Provincial Congress", p. 21.

less the older officers and Tories sympathized with the governor's problem, which was the more delicate because the provincials were only technical rebels as yet. The younger fry expressed themselves freely on it, but beyond saying that they would drub the yokels and send their leaders to the gallows, had no definite plan. But the Whigs knew, from the leaders to the rank and file, that there were two things that Gage could do.

He could seize their leaders; yet they remained safe, though Warren continued to stay boldly in Boston. Or he could seize their military stores; and that would be a blow almost equal to the first. From Boston the Whigs had stolen their own cannon, those belonging to the local artillery companies—or at least they would have stolen all, if Gage and the Admiral had not ordered the last ones spiked, in despair of saving them otherwise. But everything the Whigs had was very precious, and they were afraid of losing it, especially since there were frequent rumors that Gage had been instructed to take some action.

And the rumors were as nearly correct as rumors commonly are. The correspondence between Gage and his superior, Lord Dartmouth, shows the two in virtual agreement upon the need of doing something. Writing on January 18, Gage cautiously expressed not his own opinion but that "of most people, that, if a respectable force is seen in the field, the most obnoxious of the leaders seized, and a pardon proclaimed for all others, government will come off victorious." Nine days later Dartmouth wrote that "it is the opinion of the King's servants, in which his Majesty concurs, that the first essential step toward reëstablishing government would be to arrest and imprison the principal actors and abettors

in the Provincial Congress." [1] The matter was, however, left to Gage's discretion.

Had he felt keenly the pride of his position as the king's representative, and the irritation of his impotence in the discharge of his duty, he might have acted from exasperation alone. The governor of a large province, he had no authority beyond the mile or two of water that surrounded Boston, nor anywhere upon the mainland beyond the reach of his guns. The Continental Congress had voted that if the recent acts of Parliament were to be carried into operation by force, then all America ought to support Massachusetts in its opposition. Under his nose the Provincial Congress had set up the machinery of that opposition, and the men who managed it were frequently within his reach. Many a military man would have seized them at the first opportunity.

One chance, almost too good to be missed, has already been referred to—Warren's oration on March 6, when most of the Whig leaders could have been caught together in the Old South meetinghouse. Gage did not act. Perhaps he was deterred by their boldness, for they had no fear of him. Samuel Adams wrote of the possibility of arrest, that had the officers in the church made any attempt, "not a man of them would have been spared." [2]

Adams was as mistaken as Warren had been when,

[1] The correspondence between Gage and Dartmouth is in the files of the Colonial Office in London. Extracts were made from it by Jared Sparks, and the part which concerns this book is printed in his "Writings of Washington", III, 506–510, without any indication of the numerous omissions. But the correspondence may be found, apparently in full, in the volume for 1775 in "England and America", Bancroft Transcripts, MSS. division, New York Public Library, and will here be referred to by dates only. According to a letter in Force's "American Archives", IV, ii, column 386, Gage received Dartmouth's letter of January 18 by March 18.

[2] Wells, "Life of Samuel Adams", II, 281.

writing of Lord Percy's expedition with the first brigade on March 30, he said that "had they attempted to destroy the stores or abuse the people, not a man of them would have returned to Boston." [1] Neither Adams nor Warren seems to have been aware of the power of regular soldiers over a militia. Gage himself was very slow in trusting to it. Had he not been doubtful of the wisdom of the attempt, he would have taken the Whig leaders on the sixth of March, at no more cost of blood, and probably much less, than he fruitlessly spent on the Nineteenth of April. It may be that, knowing that many of the Boston householders had arms, he was afraid the town would rise at his back. He seems not to have been relieved of this nightmare until April 27, when, having persuaded the people by a promise that they might leave Boston (a promise which he broke), he received from them 1778 firelocks, 634 pistols, 973 bayonets, and 38 blunderbusses.[2] But even if following Dartmouth's advice had cost severe rioting, that course would have been best in the end. The leaders could have been hurried on shipboard or to the Castle in the harbor, the fortifications at the Neck could have been closed to the country folk, and the town could have been subdued by a little street fighting. It is interesting to speculate whether, deprived of the help of all the New England leaders but John Adams, who would not have been taken in that dragnet, the Americans would not have lost energy. Certainly the moderate party in the Continental Congress would have been greatly strengthened, and the declaration of independence long delayed.

The speculation is idle. Not at any time does Gage

[1] Richard Frothingham, "Life of Warren", 448.

[2] Frothingham, "Siege of Boston", 95.

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Engraved by Paul Revere from Copley's portrait.

seem to have seriously thought of arresting the Whig leaders. In spite of all the stories, there is no evidence that he made any attempt to seize Hancock and Adams at Lexington on the Nineteenth of April. He suffered Warren to live openly in Boston, reporting to the Committee of Safety in the country all of Gage's moves, and sending out warning messages in advance of the troops. Warren was able to leave Boston without hindrance after the news of Lexington had been brought to the town.

As to Gage's other alternative, it is a little difficult to understand the working of his mind, for he knew not only how difficult but also how futile would be an attempt to seize the stores. To begin with, he did not have the "respectable force" which he wanted. He had asked for twenty thousand men and he had but four thousand, and his comparative weakness was always present to his mind. As early as December 30 he was afraid of an attack on the town, probably over the ice of the frozen Back Bay, for he issued elaborate orders to meet the contingency.[1] And when he contemplated the result of an expedition into the country to destroy the provincial stores, he was quite accurate in anticipating the method that would be used against the troops. For Gage had served in the colonies, had been at Braddock's defeat, and knew his ground when, on the fourth of March, he wrote to Dartmouth:

> The most natural and most eligible mode of attack on the part of the people is that of detached parties of Bushmen who from their adroitness in the habitual use of the Firelock suppose themselves sure of their mark at a distance of 200 rods. Should hostilities unhappily commence, the first opposition would be irregular im-

[1] "The British in Boston", pp. 15–17.

petuous and incessant from the numerous Bodys that would swarm to the place of action, and all actuated by an enthusiasm wild and ungovernable. . . . [Gage was] . . . firmly persuaded there is not a man amongst [them] capable of taking the command or directing the motions of an Army. A regular encampment seems abhorrent to the genius and inclination of the People, much more is to be apprehended from their patience and cunning, in forming ambushm^ts, whereby the light infantry must suffer extremely in penetrating the country.[1]

If Gage was so sure of this (and except for the range of the provincial guns he was sufficiently correct) it is strange that he did not "sit tight" and wait for his reinforcements. But in addition he was still more accurately informed concerning the provincial organization, for in the same letter he reported concerning the congressional committee consisting of "Handcock", Church, Heath, and "Geary" (Gerry) whose business was "to observe the motions of the army, and if they attempt to penetrate into the Country immediately to communicate the intelligence to [various officers who] are to send expresses round the country to collect the Minute Men who are to oppose the Troops; the minute men amount to 15000 and are the picked men of the whole body of militia and all properly armed. . . . Their whole magazine of powder consisting of between ninety and a hundred barrels is at Concord."

[1] This is to be found in the Bancroft transcripts (see earlier footnote) in a memorandum of Intelligence appended to Gage's letter of March 4, 1775. There is of course an error in writing rods instead of yards for the range of the guns. Two hundred rods was impossible; even with the rifle of those days two hundred yards was an extreme distance, and the provincials had only smoothbores. See the first chapter in Townsend Wheeler's "American Rifle", New York, 1918. That regular soldiering was "abhorrent to the genius of the people", Washington found later to his cost.

Only a hundred barrels for a reserve of powder, and besides that, small supplies of everything else, odds and ends of cannon, few bayonets, poor canvas for tents, and little equipment of any kind. Gage knew almost as much as the Whig leaders themselves, for though he had failed to bribe Samuel Adams, Church was in his pay, and to Church, as member of the Committee of Safety, all information flowed. Gage knew, then, that of the thousand barrels of powder which the provincials hoped to secure, they could get but a small part, which was safely hidden. He himself reported to Dartmouth on March 26 as to the various stores in Concord, "At present they lay scattered in different places up and down the town and could not easily be come at by a party to be either taken or destroyed." [1]

The wonder is, then, that with so much to lose and with so little to gain, Gage should have made a single move. He knew that seven hundred marines and three more regiments of infantry had sailed to his aid, and that a regiment of dragoons, exactly what he needed for a dash into the country, was under orders for immediate embarcation as far back as January 27th.[2] When a little

[1] See the Bancroft transcripts as above. The source of Gage's Intelligences was frequently Church; yet he may have learned the above as a result of the second expedition of Ensign De Berniere and Captain Brown, who on the twentieth of March went to Concord, returning the same night. Berniere wrote, "We were informed that they had fourteen pieces of cannon (ten iron and four brass) and two cohorns [light mortars], they were mounted but in so bad a manner that they could not elevate them more than they were, that is, they were fixed to one elevation; their iron cannon they kept in a house in town, their brass they had concealed in some place behind the town, in a wood. They had also a store of flour, fish, salt and rice; and a magazine of powder and cartridges. They fired their morning gun, and mounted a guard of ten men at night." (2 Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, IV, 214–215.)

[2] Bancroft Transcripts.

more waiting would so greatly have strengthened his force, why did he take action?

One factor in his decision may have been the news that the provincials had decided to raise an army. Crude and clumsy as this necessarily would have been, it would yet have added strong opposition to an expedition of the regulars. For at least its field officers could have consulted as to the measures to be taken, and would have had some plan to oppose him with. Troops under arms, no matter how little drilled, would have added greatly to the difficulties of Smith on the Nineteenth.

But probably the greatest factor in Gage's decision lay in his own character. As a conciliator he was unquestionably well chosen. A reading of the Andrews letters is bound to convey a strong impression of Gage's patience and fairness. Percy wrote of his great lenity and moderation, and in regard to his relations with the inhabitants said, "It is astonishing with what discretion and prudence he behaves himself." [1] So long as the English government was conciliatory, Gage was exactly the man for the place. But when affairs passed beyond the stage where peace could be maintained, the good governor became the poor general. Extravagant as Charles Lee was in all his speech and actions, there was a grain of truth in his statement to Burgoyne. "I assert, Sir, that he is ignorant; that he has from the beginning been consummately ignorant of the principles, temper, disposition and force of the colonials. . . . . He has never conversed with a man who has had the courage or honesty to tell him the truth." [2] Gossipy too, and probably not

[1] Percy's Letters, p. 37.

[2] Almon's "Remembrancer", III, 151.

free from spite, as is the account written by Major Wemyss of the British army, it bears on its face (the outcome of Gage's plans being considered) a certain amount of verification. "Of moderate abilities, but altogether deficient in military knowledge. Timid and undecided in every path of duty, was unfit to command at a time of resistance, and approaching Rebellion to the Mother Country." Wemyss goes on to voice the whispers of the time, that Gage was governed by his wife, a handsome American. The truth of that we do not need to know, so long as it is plain that he was generally believed weak in the power of command.[1]

Men who are thus weak are notoriously likely to exercise command suddenly and unwisely. It is always easier to do something than nothing, especially if pressure for action is exerted. Behind Gage were the urgings of the Tories [2] and the expressed desire of the ministry that he act against the "rude rabble" of the provincials before they could perfect their organization. To strengthen his hand Dartmouth had also sent him the opinion of the attorney general, that the charter of Massachusetts empowered the governor "to use and execute the law martial in time of actual war, invasion, and *rebellion*", while further "the particulars stated in the papers you have transmitted are the history of an actual and open rebellion." [3] Although Dartmouth left the discretion to Gage, his desire was plain enough, and Gage might be sure that the news he had lately sent home would cause

[1] MS. by Major Wemyss of the British army. Copy in the Sparks papers, Harvard College Library.

[2] "Having been, I apprehend, worried into it by the native Tories that were about him." Gordon's Letter, in Force's "Archives", IV, ii, col. 626.

[3] Dartmouth to Gage, January 27, 1775.

a positive desire for action. In fact the order was already under way.[1]

As to Gage's lack of military talent, we need only to consider that one of the most unfortunate decisions during the whole war has always been laid at his door. When the Americans on June 17 rashly intrenched on Breed's Hill, the majority of Gage's advisers were in favor of springing the trap that the provincials had laid for themselves, and of cutting them off by landing troops behind them. Gage, by insisting on the bloody and almost fatal frontal attack (whose final success seems actually to have been due to his seizing the powder on the previous September) brought about a victory that was so near a defeat that the memory of it paralyzed the initiative of successive commanders during the rest of the war.[2] A good colonel Gage may have been, but he was no general. Though he had been with Braddock he invited a repetition of the famous defeat; and his service under Wolfe taught him nothing of that great man's secret of command.

Yet the decision to send an expedition to Concord was not necessarily a serious error. It might have been made

[1] Dartmouth to Gage, April 15, 1775. "It would appear to be necessary and expedient . . . that all cannon, small arms, and other military stores of every kind, that may be in any magazine, or secreted for the purpose of aiding the rebellion, should also be seized and secreted, and that the persons of all such as . . . . have committed themselves in acts of treason and rebellion, should be arrested and imprisoned." ("England and America", volume for 1775, Bancroft Transcripts, p. 113.)

[2] Frothingham ("Siege of Boston", p. 127) gives as his authority for the statement that Gage decided on the frontal attack at Bunker Hill, "British account, 1775; MS. letter." In the footnote to the account of the battle in the "Memorial History of Boston", III, 83, Justin Winsor makes the statement that Gage overruled the majority of his council. A facsimile of the order for the day, given in the same footnote, is from Lieutenant and Adjutant Waller's orderly book, now in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

a success. A swift push of mounted officers to seize Hancock and Adams at Lexington, the arrest of Warren at his home, a night march of lightly equipped troops reaching Concord at daybreak and with orders for an almost immediate return: these might have brought a quick success almost paralyzing to the Americans. Such plans Gage may have laid, and such a result he probably hoped for.

VIII

"APRIL 15th, Genl. Orders. 'The Grenadiers and Light Infantry in order to learn Grenadrs. Exercise and new evolutions are to be off all duties 'till further orders.' This I suppose is by way of a blind. I dare say they have something for them to do." [1]

So wrote Lieutenant Barker in his diary, doubtless reflecting the gossip of his mess. Probably they congratulated him as being of the light infantry, and drank to the success of whatever expedition the general had in mind against the "rebels." And very likely De Berniere's friends of the tenth regiment had much the same to say, wishing they might go in his place.

Gage's little ruse was penetrated by others besides his officers. Gordon says that "it made the Bostonians jealous",[2] John Andrews mentions it in his letter of

[1] "The British in Boston", p. 29.

[2] The Reverend William Gordon, already quoted, was minister of the third church at Roxbury, and is excellent authority for the events of April 19, if one studies not his history, but his less-well-known letter. Roused on the morning of the Nineteenth by the news of the fight at Lexington, he went to Dedham with his wife to be out of the way; but sending her southward a few days later (Stiles records her passage through Newport), Gordon himself, "knowing what untruths are propagated by each party in matters of this nature [and here we have an early recognition of our modern *propaganda*], concluded that I would ride to Concord, inquire for myself, and not rest upon depositions that might be taken by others. Accordingly I went." He produced the longest contemporary account of the battle, purporting to be a private letter but intended for publication. It was printed as "An account of the commencement of Hostilities between Great Britain and America, in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay. By the Rev. William Gordon of Roxbury, in a letter to a Gentleman in England, dated May 17, 1775." The narrative is direct and spirited, and is filled with feeling against the British. An early story, attempting to be full, accurate, and even fair, it is far more interesting and certainly more reliable

April 20,[1] and Revere in his "Letter" says that he and his self-appointed patrol noticed not only this but something more. On that same Saturday, "about 12 oClock at Night, the Boats belonging to the Transports[2] were all launched, & carried under the sterns of the men of War. (They had previously been hauld up & repaired.) . . . From these movements, we expected something serious was to be transacted."

Revere and his friends, watching from their hiding places the midnight launching of the boats, could very well conjecture what Gage might have in mind. The

than the letter published some years later as a part of Gordon's "History", written with more of an attempt at literary style, purged of its feeling, and somewhat doctored for English consumption. The Letter scrupulously gives its authority, in most places building it up from personal interviews with eyewitnesses, for the larger part of its statements. The History has none of these. The Letter is to be found in Force's "American Archives", IV, ii, columns 625*ff*. Abridgments are to be found in various New England almanacs for 1776. It will here be referred to as Gordon's Letter, in distinction from his History. For further facts of Gordon's life, see Allen's "American Biographical Dictionary", p. 389.

[1] Andrews' letter, dated April 19, 1775, is of course of the twentieth, as it begins, "Yesterday produced a scene the most shocking that New England ever beheld", and continues to tell the story as of the day before. The Andrews letters (written by John Andrews to his brother-in-law in Philadelphia) are to be found in the Massachusetts Historical Society's Proceedings for July, 1865, I. viii, 316–412. They cover the period from February 24, 1772, to April 11, 1776, and describe some of the most interesting events of Boston history, including the Tea Party and the siege. Andrews was a merchant of moderate means, closely observant of much that went on, though holding no position of any kind and not consulted by the Whig leaders. The letters display very interestingly his changes of mind, now strong for patriotic measures, now doubtful as his prosperity is threatened, but on the whole consistently Whig. Entirely without effort at literary style, the letters are racy, gossipy, and alive.

[2] Some writers have supposed that the transports themselves were used for Gage's purpose; but they were of course the sailing ships that brought the troops from England.—For the difference between Revere's Letter and his Deposition, see p. 50, *footnote*.

two ordinary exits from Boston were southward across the Neck and through Roxbury, and northward across the ferry and through Charlestown. Since plainly any expedition through either of these towns, even though at night, could not fail of detection, Gage was considering sending his troops by boat across the Back Bay to East Cambridge, whence by country lanes they could strike the road to Concord without passing through the settled part of Cambridge. This is the plan which Longfellow, in his poem "Paul Revere's Ride", so full of historical errors, calls "by sea." What the troops actually did was to cross in boats a little more than a mile and a quarter of shallow and peaceful tidal water.

It was probably these discoveries and the consequent suspicion that caused Warren to send Revere to Lexington on the following day, Sunday, April 16. By letter or by personal explanation the news was given to Samuel Adams and John Hancock, who were then staying at the house of the Reverend Jonas Clarke. Returning, Revere made arrangement, apparently on his own initiative, to meet the emergency in case Gage should be so thorough as to prevent messengers leaving Boston when his troops were in motion.

"I returned at night thro Charlestown; there I agreed with a Col. Conant, & some other Gentlemen, that if the British went out by water, we would shew two lanthorns in the North Church Steeple, and if by land, one, as a signal; for we were aprehensive it would be difficult [i. e., for Revere himself] to cross the Charles River, or git over Boston neck."

The news, thus reaching Charlestown, would have a long start of the troops as they were slowly ferried to

East Cambridge, or tramped the long detour through Roxbury and Brookline.[1]

There is no Boston record of any importance for Monday the 17th of April and the daytime of Tuesday the 18th. Percy and Andrews write nothing of those two days, nor Revere. Rowe's diary is wholly unsuspicious. Barker occupies his pages rather fully with a record of promotions and an account of the progress of some regimental squabbles, but says nothing of the new evolutions which he and the rest of the light infantry were supposed to learn. But we may be sure that the provincials were keenly on the watch, and that Gage was

[1] The quotation is from Revere's "Letter." The average reader will be satisfied to know that the route planned by Gage was actually the shortest as the bird flies, going pretty directly northwest. Having, however, the disadvantage of boats, marshes, and a few miles of zigzag roads, its only real advantage was secrecy. News flashed by Revere's signal to Charlestown and overleaping the ferry, would be already started on a road leading almost directly northwest to Concord, joining the route of the expedition before West Cambridge. Messengers or troops going out by Roxbury would have several miles more of travel. All this had its part in the strategy of the following day.

Readers who desire to examine the subject more closely must study old maps, and those who have a knowledge of modern Boston and its environs must accustom themselves to the changes since 1775. There was no bridge to Charlestown, only a ferry. There were no bridges to Cambridge until one reached the Boylston Street (the Stadium or Lars Anderson) bridge. The best map for the period is Pelham's of 1775, reproduced in small scale in the introduction to the third volume of the "Memorial History of Boston." A reproduction on a much larger scale is sold by W. A. Butterfield, Number 59 Bromfield Street, Boston. The men who talked and wrote of these things in my boyhood (notably Edward Everett Hale, my pastor, then a man of middle age) had a vivid memory of Boston comparatively unchanged. But in the eighteen-seventies the Back Bay had become a waste of gravel filling, and to-day almost every trace of the old outline of land and water is gone, because of the filling of every cove, bay, and marsh in Boston, Dorchester, Roxbury, Brookline, Cambridgeport and East Cambridge, to name only the territory covered by this book. Walling's large map of Boston and vicinity in 1859 shows a halfway stage between Pelham's and the map of to-day. For a careful study of the old topography, see Mr. Paul Brown's end papers, made for this volume.

busily and unsuspiciously completing his own secret preparations.

Perhaps early in the afternoon he sent out a few small parties of mounted officers, whose business should be, in the evening when ordinary travel had ceased, to stop all who appeared to be messengers. And he gave orders for the grenadiers and light infantry to embark at moonrise, which was not far from ten o'clock. Their commander was not to know his destination until the last moment.

In sending the grenadiers and light infantry Gage had chosen what has often been described as the flower of his little army. But the grenadiers and light infantry would be the flower of any British or European army of that period.[1] In those days these were not separate corps, but attached to each regiment were two special companies, one of grenadiers, an organization of long standing in European warfare, and one of light infantry, of much more recent date. The grenadiers were so called because, historically, they were armed with grenades, which were sometimes a part of their equipment much later than 1775. Yet their use had become more and more rare. The high, pointed caps which the grenadiers traditionally wore had been adopted for convenience in slinging their muskets; at such a time broad hats were inconvenient. Grenades, when carried, were in a pouch or slung from a bandolier; in addition the men had firelock, bayonet or sword, and sometimes an ax or hatchet for assaulting palisades. But on ordinary service the grenades and extra equipment were not used, and, gen-

[1] Almon's "Remembrancer for 1775", III, 86, says in reference to Gage's detachment of grenadiers and light infantry, "Everyone knows that this description comprehends the best and most active troops of the whole body."

erally speaking, the grenadiers had become merely a picked corps, armed like the rest. This is what they were in Gage's army. "The Gentleman's Compleat Military Dictionary", published by Edes and Gill of Boston in 1759, and probably much studied by aspiring young militiamen, says, "the grenadiers are generally the tallest and briskest fellows, and always the first upon attack." When Paul Revere, captured beyond Lexington, had his horse taken away and given to one of his captors whose mare was tired, Revere wrote in explanation, "He was a sargent of Grenadiers, and had a small Horse",[1] thus giving the reader of that day to understand that the horse was tired because the sergeant was a big man.

Gage's grenadiers were, therefore, the men to do the heavy work of any expedition; but the light infantry were, in the present case, of even more importance. For these were picked men also, of more active build, lightly armed, and ready for the service as flankers which, whether Gage foresaw it or not, was on the following day to be almost the salvation of the expedition. Detaching the grenadier and light infantry companies, then, from each of his regiments, as was frequently the custom of those days, Gage caused them to be assembled late in the evening of Tuesday the 18th of April.

It was the weakness of such a force that it was not trained to act together, nor to be commanded regularly by the men appointed to lead it. As it happened, no difficult evolutions were required of it; and yet it is a natural question whether two regiments, led by their own colonels, would not have been better under control on Lexington green the next morning, and in the retreat from Concord. Certainly the soldiers could not have been

[1] Revere's "Letter."

accustomed to their leaders, Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith of the Tenth Regiment, and Major John Pitcairn of the Marines.

Smith is said to have been chosen as the ranking regimental officer of Gage's army, a reason good enough where no special qualifications were required. Of Smith are to be found no particulars except in a fanciful tale printed by one Howe in 1827.[1] The undignified figure cut by the "Smith" of the early part of the story scarcely fits any one who had achieved the rank of a British lieutenant colonel, and the story may be dismissed. Smith must be left to make his own impression on the reader of the actual story of the day.

Why Pitcairn, the leader of the marines, was selected for this expedition, may perhaps be explained by the story, which can be traced to no contemporary source, that he had previously examined the roads to Concord and had studied the town in disguise.[2] The performance would be quite unusual for a man of Pitcairn's age and rank; but if he had merely ridden to Concord openly it might have qualified him for the post.—It is one of the tantalizations of historical study that many chatty and delightful writers make their statements with a charming vagueness that leaves a doubt as to historical accuracy. Maybe they recount a grandmother's tale, all the more interesting because it has grown in the telling; or perhaps

[1] Of the edition all but two copies were burned, but the story is reprinted in Hurd's "Middlesex", II, 579–584, and in part in the *Boston Advertiser*, April 20, 1886. As it adduces no important facts, seems full of an old man's brag, and ends with the impossible statement that on the Nineteenth Howe met Percy coming out through Charlestown instead of Roxbury, it is here disregarded.

[2] Grindall Reynolds ("Historical and Other Papers", p. 180) refers to this as tradition; but S. A. Drake ("Historic Fields and Mansions of Middlesex", p. 381) accepts it as fact.

in some old manuscript or printed in some otherwise obscure book they have found the eye-witness' statement. A story like this of Pitcairn, first appearing in print a hundred years after the event, carries its own doubt; but there are many other anecdotes of the day of Concord Fight which so nearly approach the borderline of established fact that their exact position is difficult to define.— In the case of Pitcairn's choice for the Concord expedition, however, we are told that he was a seasoned veteran and general favorite, popular with Whigs as well as Tories. For those reasons alone he may have been selected for a post which was likely to demand discretion and good temper.

Besides the regular members of the companies chosen for the detachment, it is very likely that there were several that went as volunteers, especially among the officers. Gordon says, "the companies having been filled up." Drake makes Philip d'Auvergne, Duke of Bouillon, from the ship *Asia*, a member of the expedition, without saying how such a man came to be a British naval lieutenant.[1] It is very likely that volunteers filled gaps in the companies, and Cooper depended on this when he made his hero Lionel Lincoln a member of the expedition.[2]

Further, it is frequently stated that Tories went as well. If so, they served as guides. De Berniere is credited with being Smith's conductor to Concord; but unless he had more knowledge of the roads than his narrative shows, he was scarcely qualified. The ways across the Cambridge

[1] S. A. Drake, "Historic Fields and Mansions of Middlesex", p. 358.

[2] Harold Murdock includes in the expedition Lieutenant Colonel Bernard, of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, or 23d Regiment. I do not find him mentioned in any account of the whole day, except as wounded; and in the absence of some contemporary statement that, like Pitcairn, he came out with Smith, it seems safest to assume that he came out with his own regiment, with Percy, on the next day.

marshes he may have learned in rambling around Boston; but the road from Cambridge to Concord he describes as if it were new to him. Besides, he passed it in the night.[1] Tories, therefore, may very well have been needed to point out the roads. Gordon includes in the detachment "several of the inimical torified natives." Shattuck says that "Captain Beeman of Petersham was one."[2] The account in the *Worcester Spy* of May 3 says that each searching party in Concord "was supposed to have a tory pilot", and furthermore, that a young provincial, forced by the troops to assist in carrying the wounded, identified one Warden, "a barber who lives in Boston", with the troops, and "heard them say, he was one of their pilots; he likewise saw the said barber fire twice upon our people." Young Murray, son of councillor Murray, was captured. That Tories went out with Smith seems to be proved by the proclamation reported to the Provincial Congress on June 16, proposing to pardon all enemies who surrendered, except Gage, Graves the Admiral (who was very heartily hated), "and all the natives of America, not belonging to the navy or army, who went out with the regular troops on the nineteenth of April last, and were countenancing, aiding, and assisting them in the robberies and murders then committed."[3] But though it must be true that with Smith went

[1] 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, IV, 215.

[2] "History of Concord", 107.

[3] This offer of pardon was of course merely a piece of rhodomontade, and was in ridicule of Gage's bombastic proclamation of June 12, written by Burgoyne. Gage's paper, beginning, "Whereas the infatuated multitudes" and containing an offer of pardon to all except Hancock and Adams, "whose offences are of too flagitious a nature to admit of any other consideration than that of condign punishment", (which words were literally repeated by the provincials concerning Gage, Graves, and the Tories who went out on the Nineteenth) is one of the unconscious humors of the siege of Boston.

various Tory guides, their actions on the day are lost in the confusion of the general story.

The numbers of Smith's force are variously stated. The provincial proclamation just noted names them as a thousand; Gordon says "eight hundred men or better, officers included." Evelyn of the 4th Regiment, who went out with Percy, says "near 700 men." Stiles quotes an officer of the 59th Regiment as saying "six hundred men including officers." Barker says "about 600 Men." The highest British estimate is in the Richard Pope Manuscript, which states that the detachment "made 21 companies, consisting of 800 men." Contemporary statements differ, therefore, as widely as four hundred men, with the Americans giving generally the higher figures, the British the lower.[1] The common agreement of American historians has been on eight hundred men,[2] but the latest authority, Harold Murdock, in his careful computation sets the figure at less than seven hundred.[3] The number probably was in the neighborhood of seven hundred men.

Such, then, was the detachment sent out under Smith, always to be distinguished from the brigade which went to its rescue under Percy. As we have said, when once his orders were issued, Gage surely felt that everything had been well prepared, and that the rest should go like clockwork, since no one could discover his plans.

[1] "Journal of Each Provincial Congress", p. 345; Force's "American Archives", IV, ii, 626; "Journal and Letters of Captain W. Glanville Evelyn", p. 53; Stiles' "Literary Diary", I, 575; "The British in Boston", p. 31.

[2] Shattuck, Frothingham, Bancroft, Wells, Charles Hudson, Lossing, E. E. Hale ("Memorial History of Boston"), Justin Winsor ("Narrative and Critical History of America", VI, 123).

[3] "The Nineteenth of April", p. 47.

IX

"IN war," wrote Stedman in 1794, almost the first English soldier to write of the American war, where he had "served under Sir. W. Howe, Sir. H. Clinton, and the Marquis Cornwallis",—[1]

. . . there is nothing that so much avails as secrecy of design and celerity of execution: Nor, on the contrary, so hurtful as unnecessary openness and procrastination. General Gage on the evening of the eighteenth of April told lord Percy, that he intended to send a detachment to seize the stores at Concord, and to give the command to colonel Smith, "who knew that he was to go, but not where." He meant it to be a secret expedition, and begged of lord Percy to keep it a profound secret. As this nobleman was passing from the general's quarters home to his own, perceiving eight or ten men conversing together on the common, he made up to them; when one of the men said— "the British troops have marched, but they will miss their aim." "What aim?" said Lord Percy. "Why," the man replied, "the cannon at Concord." Lord Percy immediately returned on his steps, and acquainted General Gage, not without marks of surprise and disapprobation, of what he had just heard. The general said that his confidence had been betrayed, for that he had communicated his design to one person only besides his lordship.

[1] See the title page to his "History of the American War." It has been stated that Stedman served on the Nineteenth, as a member of Percy's brigade; but had he been able to claim so early a connection with the war, he would have added Gage to his collection of commanders. While he shows excellent knowledge of the early part of the day, he makes too little of the retreat for one who had taken part in it, and seems hazy as to Percy's method of crossing the river. The quotation here given is from his "History of the American War", I, 134, correcting three misprints.

It has been frequently said that the "one person only" was the general's wife, who told his plans to the Americans. A basis for this conjecture has been seen in the statement in Reverend William Gordon's "History",[1] that "a daughter of liberty, unequally yoked in point of politics", had previously sent warning to Adams in Lexington. But this was not necessarily Mrs. Gage, nor was Stedman's "one person only" necessarily a woman. No other hint has come down that Mrs. Gage was untrue to her husband's fortunes. It is wiser to leave such a speculation to those who like romance, and find the true explanation of the discovery of Gage's plans in more natural causes.

It is true that at the actual start of the expedition the British took what they probably considered sufficient precaution. Visiting the American camp in October, 1775, Jeremy Belknap gathered the following statement, which, supposing it to be deserter's news, is credible enough.[2]

> On the night of April 18. . . their men were not apprised of the design, till, just as it was time to march, they were waked up by the sergeants putting their hands on them, and whispering gently to them; and were even conducted by a back way out of the barracks, without the knowledge of their comrades, and without the observation of the sentries. They walked through the street with the utmost silence. It being about ten o'clock, no sound was heard but of their feet: a dog, happening to bark, was instantly killed by a bayonet. They proceeded to the beach under the new powder-house,—the most unfrequented part of the town; and there embarked on board the boats, which had their oars muffled to prevent a noise.

[1] Gordon's "History", I, 309.

[2] 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, IV, pp. 84–86.

But all this attempted secrecy would be futile before the men whom Percy met on the Common, whose knowledge of the movement of the troops might come to them in the simplest way in the world. This is plain from a reading of the ninth chapter of Cooper's "Lionel Lincoln." The youthful hero of that overdone novel, the survival of which is due only to its depicting historical events, finds himself, on Beacon Hill, in conversation with a British subaltern, who exclaims, "'Ha! listen, sir: there they go, now; the pride of our army! I know them by their heavy tread.'

"Lionel did listen attentively, and plainly distinguished the measured step of a body of disciplined men, moving rapidly across the common, as if marching towards the water-side."—And any other man in his senses, being upon the Common at that fairly early hour, could tell, although the moon had not yet risen, that troops were moving. The men whom Percy, probably muffled in his military cloak, interrogated, may have thought that the troops had marched out by the Neck. Others, watching more closely, interpreted more clearly. As for the objective of the expedition, every one knew that Concord was the only place at which Gage would strike.

There are various stories of the way in which the news came to Warren. S. A. Drake says, "If the British grenadier had not gone into a shop with his accoutrements on, or if the Province House groom had not been indiscreet. . . ." [1] And E. E. Hale tells how the British soldier Gibson let out the secret.[2] Other traditional

[1] "Historic Fields and Mansions of Middlesex", p. 354.

[2] "Memorial History of Boston", III, 68, *footnote*. Belknap (see previous footnote) has a story of an informant kept in pay by Warren. If American, pay was not necessary. Whether American or British, there would not have been time to put him on the scent, as in Belknap's story.

tales relate similar stories. Richard Frothingham, in his "Life of Warren", says merely that a vigilant patriot informed Warren that the troops were marching, and gives for his authority, "manuscript." At any rate, it is certain that the news came to Warren's ears very soon after the troops were afoot and even before it was brought to Revere.

Warren acted at once. Revere gives two statements in his manuscripts, which practically agree. In the Deposition he says:

"I was sent for by Doct^{r}. Joseph Warren, of said Boston, on the evening of the 18th of April, about 10 °Clock; When he desired me 'to go to Lexington, and inform Mr. Samuel Adams, and the Hon. John Hancock Esq, that there was a number of Soldiers, composed of Light troops, & Grenadiers, marching to the bottom of the Common, where was a number of Boats to receive them; it was supposed, that they were going to Lexington, by the way of Cambridge River,[1] to take *them*, or go to Concord, to distroy the Colony Stores.'"

Warren, therefore, had the story quite as completely as Revere could have learned it from his friends, or as Gage himself.

In his "Letter" Revere gives this additional information. "When I got to Dr. Warren's house, I found he had sent an express by land to Lexington—a Mr. W^{m} Daws." [2]

William Dawes, Junior, was, like Revere, an experienced express rider for the Whigs. Just turned thirty, he had lately thrashed a soldier who insulted his wife, and had

[1] Revere uses the name Cambridge River as synonymous with the Charles. The two sometimes appear together on old maps.

[2] For the rides of Revere and Dawes, and for the route of Smith's detachment, see the map on the inside of the front cover of this volume.

been concerned in the successful plot to steal from under the eyes of a guard the cannon belonging to the artillery company commanded by the Tory, Paddock. In lifting the cannon he had silently to endure the pain of having his cuff button embedded in his wrist. When the wound troubled him, he went to Warren to have it dressed, when his refusal to tell how it had been injured was as good as an explanation to the keen doctor. Dawes was therefore just the man for Warren's needs, and served him well at such a time. For disguise, he had been accustomed to travel as a farmer or miller, often with a bag of meal behind him on his horse; perhaps on this occasion he dressed the same part. We are told that he arrived at the "lines" on the Neck at a time when the gates were open for the passage of some regulars, and Dawes, "attending their motions apparently as a spectator, was allowed by the connivance of the guard at the gate, who was privately friendly to him, to pass out with them." —So much for the coolness of the man whom Warren had chosen, and such was the result of Dawes' evident habit of scraping acquaintance with such of the soldiers as he found to be friendly fellows.[1]

Not satisfied with but one messenger, and probably not sure whether Dawes had been able to leave the town, Warren sent for Revere, who if he could get away would

[1] These statements are taken from W. H. Holland's "William Dawes and His Ride with Paul Revere", privately printed, Boston, 1878. See pp. 26–27, 33–34, 37. Holland depends on statements written out by Dawes' two daughters. The credit for Dawes' exploit has sometimes been given to Ebenezer Dorr, doubtless because of the similarity of the names. Dorr was a leather dresser who carried the news as far as Roxbury, but does not appear to have taken the trouble to relay it further. See Holland's book, controverting the statements made by "C. C." (Catherine Curtis) in the "New England Historical and Genealogical Register for 1853", p. 139.

take a shorter route. Revere's story of his leaving the town is simple.

"I left Dr. Warren, called upon a friend, and desired him to make the signals. I then went Home, took my Boots & Surtout, & went to the North part of the Town, where I had kept a Boat; two friends rowed me across Charles River, a little to the eastward where the Somerset Man of War lay. It was then young flood, the Ship was winding, & the moon was Rising. They landed me on Charlestown side."

In this simple statement lies the germ of much controversy and the spring of much romance. From which steeple the signals were hung out, and who hung them, have been the two questions most fertile in dispute. It seems right to believe that the steeple was that of Christ Church, still standing, and that the friend of Revere was his long-time companion, Captain John Pulling.[1] Family traditions have naturally been added to every turn of the story, more particularly the one concerning

[1] For an argument in favor of the Old Brick Meetinghouse in North Square see Richard Frothingham's "The Alarm on the Night of April 18th, 1775." Various writers have argued on both sides. The deciding argument seems to be that of Reverend John Lee Watson, in two letters published in Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, 1st series, xv, pp. 163*ff*. The first points out that Revere would have trusted only a known friend like Pulling, and not Newman the sexton; the second that not only was Christ Church known as the North Church before this time, but that its steeple was far the better for this purpose. On this latter point see also Holland, "William Dawes and his Ride with Paul Revere", who uses Revere's own drawings of the two churches to prove the greater suitableness of Christ Church, whose steeple was taller, better situated, and with more convenient windows for displaying the signals. In "The Paul Revere Signal Lanterns" pamphlet, Concord, 1876, William Wheildon agrees that Christ Church was used for the signals, and argues that the lanterns were not hung, but merely held for a short time. Wheildon argues strongly in favor of Newman, but is so dogmatic, and in other parts of his paper is so very positive, that he prejudices his own case.

a certain woolen petticoat which Revere received out of the window from a fair young Whig, to whom he communicated his need of something to muffle the oars. Such unauthenticated embroideries on the theme of Revere's plain narrative have not half the value of the picture which he unconsciously sketches as his boat is rowed to the eastward of the *Somerset*. It was young flood, and the ship was winding with the turn of the tide; an alert sentinel would have seen the boat against the rising moon, but the boat passed and gained the shadow of the shore. And Paul Revere, quite unconscious of the heroic figure which he was to make in history, found Colonel Conant, who had seen his signals, and "went to git me a Horse."

X

WITH Gage's troops embarking, and Revere and Dawes starting with the alarm, what were conditions in the country? Outside of the town there was, during Monday the seventeenth of April and Tuesday the eighteenth, no feeling of alarm, even among those to whom Revere's news of the sixteenth had been told. Such is the way with people before war. What Gideon Welles wrote of 1861 was exactly applicable to 1775. "Neither party appeared to be apprehensive of or to realize the gathering storm. There was a general belief, indulged in by most persons, that an adjustment would in some way be brought about, without any extensive resort to extreme measures. . . . Until blood was spilled there was hope of reconciliation." So in that spring of 1775 people went about their daily tasks with no preparation for the outbreak. The farmer planted his crops, the minister his garden, the women tended their children and performed their daily tasks. And though in the evenings the men drilled, and by candlelight cast bullets or made cartridges, no practical thought was given to the almost certain knowledge that when trouble came it would break out along the road from Boston to Concord. No system of refuges for women and children was planned; beyond having men nightly on the watch at Roxbury and Charlestown and Concord, no certain method of spreading the news was concerted; and most particularly, no rendezvous was appointed for the gathering of battalions or regiments, no strategy was devised for meeting an attack or cutting off retreat, and no method of coördinating the militia under a single will was worked out.

Looking back upon that time, having in mind the hideous facts of war as practised in 1914, the innocence and simplicity of our people in 1775 is amazing. It is true that no German had come to preach systematic ruthlessness; that was all in the future. No memory of Indian terrorism disturbed them; that was all in the past. Since Philip's War, a century before, no one had been killed by an enemy within many miles of Boston, and the idea of death and ravaging now, if it presented itself, was easily dismissed in the face of the smiling prosperity and serenity of that lovely countryside. Perhaps instinctively our people depended on the known humanity of the British, and in that they did well; but they had yet to learn that war even at its best (if it has any best) is very terrible. And so they went through the motions of getting ready, while neither practically nor emotionally did they perceive what was to come.

The only bodies that concerned themselves with the news that went out from Boston on Sunday were the committees of safety and supplies. These, since the Provincial Congress had adjourned on the fifteenth, had the sole charge of public affairs, and they confined themselves strictly to the business of looking after the military stores. Instead of planning to move minutemen into the danger zone and women and children out of it, instead of preparing to break down bridges, fell trees across the highways, and pick out a few vantage points at which the regulars could be withstood, instead (to be brief) of calling on their military men for the advantage of their skill, they acted as civilians and sought only to conserve their supplies.

The reasons are not difficult to give. In the first place, even the militia, generals and all, were under the orders

of the Committee of Safety. The proposed army had not been raised; there was no staff organization to act on its own initiative and plan for the emergency. So new was the situation that even though there were on the committees Colonel Heath (who seems not yet to have assumed the generalship to which he had been appointed), Colonel Palmer, Captain White, Colonel Gardner, Colonel Lee, and Colonel Lincoln, they seem to have acted in a civilian capacity. So far as we know, no proposition was made to consider the present a military emergency. If such a proposal was made, it was not acted on.

And, in the second place, these militia officers had had little more practical experience than the Honorable John Hancock, who sat with them and sometimes liked to call himself colonel because of his one-time service with the governor's guards in Boston. Some of these men may have served, when younger, in subordinate capacity in the Indian wars; they may have read (as we are told that Heath did) the campaigns of the great Frederick. Heath and Lincoln were to serve in Washington's military family, and to gain the affectionate regard of that great military genius. But neither of them, nor any of the men there present, was experienced enough to see what should be done and influential enough to insist on doing it.

And further, they were handicapped by the ingrained idea that the breaking of the peace should be on the part of the British. Determined to wait until the blow was struck, they never looked beyond in order to make sure that the return blow should be effective.

So these two committees, sitting together, voted during the seventeenth of April to appoint officers of artil-

lery here, and of infantry there; they desired Colonel Barrett at Concord to raise an artillery company, with no immediate thought that cannon might be as useful to them as to Lord Percy; they settled upon the pay for the captains of artillery companies, and for the "Lieutenant of fire-works"; and for the drummers and fifers they decided to allow more pay than for "common men", perhaps because any one could fire a gun while very few could make music. And they showed only a little uneasiness, late in the day, when they ordered that the four six-pounders at Concord be transported to Groton, and two seven-inch brass mortars to Acton.

This was at Concord. The next day the committees met at Menotomy, which is modern Arlington, perhaps to be nearer to the source of news. Still sitting together, and with more apprehension that something was going to happen, they began to order the military stores from place to place. The ammunition was to be distributed in nine different towns; part of the provisions was to be removed from Concord; ammunition carts were ordered; companies of Matrosses (which are artillerymen, few of whom had as yet been enlisted) were to be stationed at six towns; each of the "twelve field-pieces belonging to the province" was to be provided with thirty-three rounds of "Round-Shot, Grape-Shot, and Canisters of Langrage", together with cartridges, tubes, and wads; certain materials were to be carried from Stoughtonham to Sudbury, and certain others from Stow to Groton; various stores, apparently at Concord, should be divided with other towns; the powder recently ordered to Concord should be kept back, or if it had come it should not be made up into cartridges; and the musket balls at Concord should be buried. And after these hesitating

and fumbling preparations the committees voted, possibly thinking that more might be learned the next day, to adjourn until nine the next morning instead of the customary hour of ten.[1]

Perhaps as early as noon on this Tuesday, the eighteenth, Gage's groups of officers had begun to leave the city on their appointed tasks.[2] It was not unusual for small numbers of them to dine in the nearer taverns, and when several of them took their meal at Cambridge it was not specially remarked. Not till late in the day, when this dozen or so of men, instead of returning to Boston, started farther into the country, was their action noticed. But then neither the falling dusk, nor the military cloaks that covered their arms, were able to conceal them. After the meeting of the Committee of Safety, two of its members had started toward their homes in Charlestown. "Mr. Watson and myself," wrote Richard Devens in an undated memorandum some months afterward, "came off in my chaise at sunset. On the road we met a great number of B. O. [British officers] and their servants on horseback, who had dined that day at Cambridge. We rode some way after we met them, and then turned back and rode through them, went and informed our friends at Newell's. We stopped there till they came up and rode by. We then left our friends, and I came home, after leaving Mr. Watson at his house." [3]

Devens' friends were three other members of the Committee of Safety who were to spend the night at the

[1] See "Records of the Committee of Safety." In "Journal of Each Provincial Congress", pp. 516–518. See also Force's "American Archives", IV, ii, 742*ff.*

[2] Belknap (1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, IV, 84–86) has nine of them leave town "just before night."

[3] Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 57, *footnote.*

tavern in Menotomy where the committee had met.[1] These were Messrs. Gerry, Orne, and Lee, and they deemed the matter of sufficient importance to send word to Hancock at Lexington, warning him of the coming of the officers. Hancock, staying with Samuel Adams at the house of the Reverend Jonas Clarke, apparently took steps to see what the officers were about, and later in the evening sent word to Gerry that the horsemen had gone on to Concord, and that warning would be sent to that town. As events proved, the officers did not go as far as Concord, and neither did Hancock's warning.

On receipt of Hancock's assurance that he had not been molested, Gerry and his two friends calmly went to bed, evidently persuaded that nothing further was to happen.

Meanwhile, at about the same time, a young Lexington man, Solomon Brown, having come home from Boston early in the evening, told William Munroe that he had seen nine British officers on the road, "travelling leisurely, sometimes before and sometimes behind him; that he had discovered, by the occasional blowing aside of their top-coats, that they were armed." [2] Munroe was the orderly sergeant of the Lexington minutemen, and feeling responsibility for the safety of Hancock and Adams, gathered a guard of eight men, and posted himself with them before the door. In doing this he must have talked with Hancock concerning the officers, and as messengers

[1] Devens' memorandum says Newell's Tavern; the records of the committee say Wetherby's. A memorial tablet has been erected before the site of the Black Horse Tavern in Arlington. These three were the same.

[2] See the deposition of William Munroe taken in 1825, in Elias Phinney's "History of the Battle at Lexington", reprint of 1875, p. 33. See also deposition of Solomon Brown, taken in 1775, in Shattuck's "History of Concord", p. 341.

to Concord he sent off Solomon Brown and two other Lexington men. Munroe and his guard remained at the Clarke house, and it was they who, awake and afoot, were able to spread the alarm as soon as Revere brought it.

And Revere made good time. Dawes must have had the start of him, for Revere had to pass the river, and there was some delay after landing before he could get his horse. Probably he was but half expected in Charlestown, since the signal might have been taken as meaning that he could not leave Boston. Richard Devens, returning from Menotomy, had early been informed—from what source his memorandum does not say—that the British were "all in motion", and were surely coming out. Waiting, however, for authentic news, he was told of the signal lanterns; he did not see them, for his memorandum speaks of but one; it is probable that Conant, on the watch, sent him the news. On receiving it, Devens at once sent an express to Hancock; and a little later, when Revere himself landed, busied himself in getting a horse for him as well. Before Revere left, Devens warned him of the officers who had been seen on the road.[1]

[1] For the proper coördination the reader may study Revere's "Letter" (Goss's "Life of Revere", I, 180*ff*., or printed with some slight errors, 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, V, 105*ff*.). He will find the Devens memorandum in Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 57, *footnote*. William Wheildon excited himself unduly over his interpretation of the latter, seeming to believe that Devens could not get any news of affairs in Boston except through Revere. Through other channels news could come to Charlestown as to unusual movements of the troops; it is simply another proof that Gage could not hope to keep his expedition secret. Any such news, reaching Charlestown, would be brought to Devens as a member of the Committee of Safety. Devens was wary enough not to act on mere rumor, and waited until positive news, through Revere's signal, was received. What became of the "express" that he then sent off, is conjectural. Frothingham believes that this was a verbal message referred to by Jonas Clarke; if so, it is hard to believe that the Clarke household would

Revere, when finally ready to start, in spite of his delays was well in advance of the British. He had told Devens that the troops were actually in the boats, but their lumbering ship-tenders were much slower than his light craft, their route was much longer, and it is possible that they had to make more than one trip. It was early moonlight when he started. Our modern Paul Reveres, celebrating his ride, take their departure by daylight, escorted by a troop of calvary, by boys, dogs, and possibly by aeroplanes; at regular stations they speak into radio transmitters, informing a world of listeners-in that the regulars are coming out. But Revere himself started at eleven o'clock at night, alone, unarmed, and facing a silent road that very likely was picketed by armed men as well horsed as he.

Nevertheless he first tried the direct road. This was by the left or southerly side of Charlestown common, after he had crossed the neck—for Charlestown was a peninsula like Boston, and its common was on the mainland. He had got nearly opposite the place where Mark, a negro criminal, had been hung in chains (a spot plainly marked by a gallows on Pelham's map) when he saw under a tree two men on horseback, whom he presently made out to be British officers. ("I was near enough to see their Holsters, & cockades.") One of them started

be trying to sleep when Revere arrived. (See text, p. 90.) It seems more likely that this verbal message was brought by Solomon Brown, and having to do merely with the movements of the mounted officers, was acted on and then dismissed. Possibly the Devens express was stopped by the officers who tried to halt Revere.

Wheildon is also troubled by his interpretation of the end of the Devens memorandum ("I procured a horse and sent off P. Revere to give intelligence at Menotomy and Lexington") for he thinks Devens wished to take to himself the credit of Revere's ride. But no such interpretation is necessary. See Wheildon, "The Paul Revere Signal Lanterns."

toward Revere, the other prepared to cut him off should he dodge the first. Turning his horse short about, Revere "rid upon a full Gallop for Mistick Road", and got clear away, for his pursuer, endeavoring to cut him off by a shorter route, mired himself in a clay pond.

Revere's course was now unopposed. At the top of Winter Hill he might have taken the direct road to Menotomy; instead he turned to the right and went into Medford, a detour of but a few miles; he waked the captain of the minutemen, and after that alarmed almost every house until he got to Lexington. Dawes, having farther to go, reached the same destination, the minister's house, half an hour or more later.[1]

There were staying with Mr. Clarke's family that night

[1] F. W. Coburn, ("The Battle of April 19th, 1775", page 25) measured the distances carefully with the cyclometer of his bicycle, and made Revere's ride to be 12 86/88 miles, and Dawes' 16 61/88.

The student will see that the above account of Revere's ride, and also further statements concerning Revere, have been arrived at by collating, paraphrasing, and quoting Revere's two narratives.

As accuracy is the aim of the historian and not romance, one cannot too frequently warn the reader of Longfellow's indifference to (perhaps ignorance of!) historic fact. Another poet, less distinguished, upon learning, perhaps, the title of "William Dawes and His Ride With Paul Revere", achieved the line "as they dashed through the shadows side by side." A little reading of Holland's book would have prevented that misconception. But no objection as to historical accuracy can be raised to the lines "pronounced" by the Reverend John Pierpont at the celebration of the completion of the Acton monument in 1852:

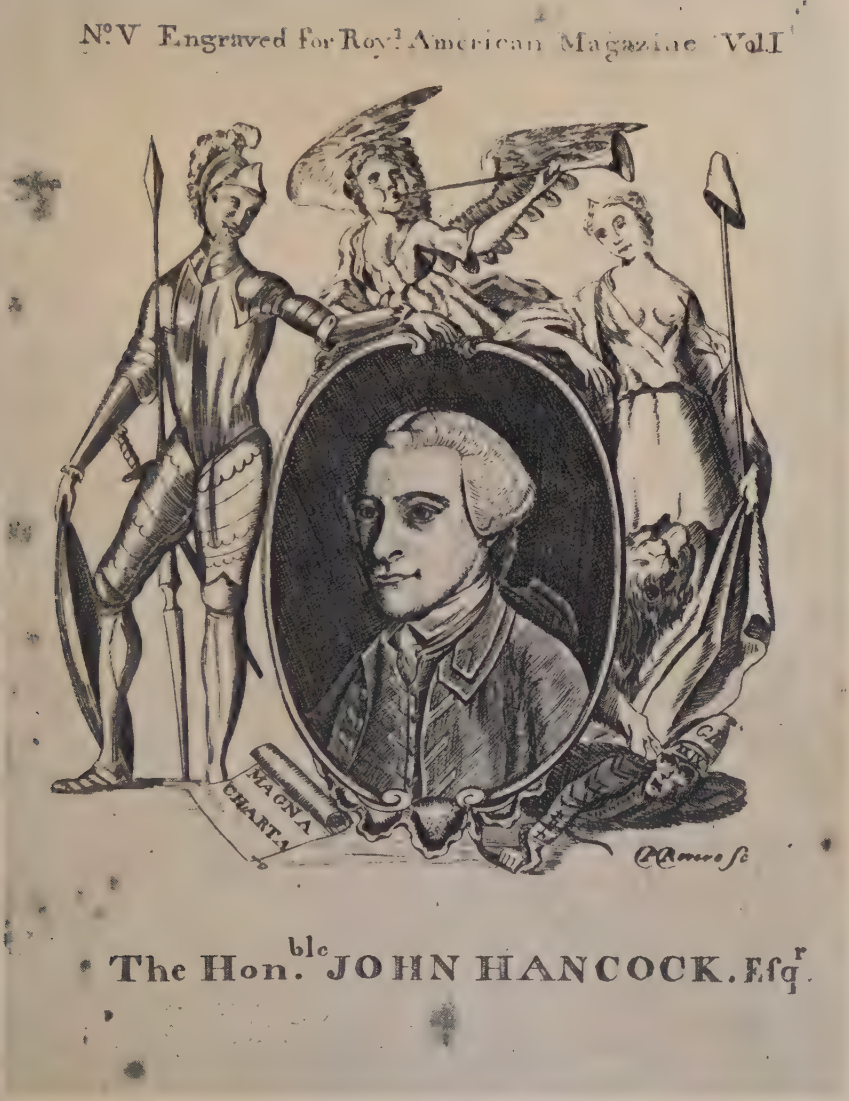
> ". . . . . The foremost, Paul Revere,
> At Warren's bidding, has the gauntlet run,
> Unscathed, and, dashing into Lexington,
> While midnight wraps him in her mantle dark,
> Halts at the house of Reverend Mr. Clark."

It must be that the rest of the poem, occupying six pages of close print, was not up to sample, for the audience, having sat before an empty banquet table for two hours, finally became impatient for their dinner, and "made some considerable clatter with their knives and forks." The poem, accompanying an oration by the Honorable George S. Boutwell, was published in Boston in 1852.

Mrs. Thomas Hancock, John Hancock's aged aunt, and her protégé Miss Dorothy Quincy, who was Hancock's fiancée. Hancock was also there himself, and Samuel Adams. The household had received two warnings concerning the British officers who were afield; but thinking that they had gone on to Concord, and believing it to be enough if they sent men to warn that town, they had seen to the performance of that duty and had gone to bed, but probably were not all asleep. For what happened at the house we have two accounts, one related forty-seven years afterwards and written down immediately by General Sumner, to whom it was told by John Hancock's widow, then Madam Scott; and one deposed to in 1825 by William Munroe, the sergeant on guard at the door. According to the canons of historic research, it is scarcely to be expected that the memories of these two old people were still accurate; and according to all police-court rules of evidence, it would be suspicious if they exactly agreed. Accordingly we are not to be surprised if Munroe and Madam Scott disagree as to whether Hancock had a gun, nor if the sergeant has forgotten Dawes' name and calls him Lincoln. These statements are not really material, and we are obliged to the sergeant for the picturesque story of Revere's arrival.

"About midnight, Col. Paul Revere rode up and requested admittance. I told him the family had just retired, and had requested, that they might not be disturbed by any noise about the house. 'Noise!' said he, 'you'll have noise enough before long. The regulars are coming out!'"

A tradition says that Hancock recognized Revere's voice, and called out, "Come in, Revere. We are not



JOHN HANCOCK.
Engraved by Paul Revere from Copley's portrait.

afraid of *you*." Revere delivered his message, and then the peace of the house was indeed broken. It was not till daylight, perhaps not till Revere's coming a second time, that Hancock could be dissuaded from his determination to fight beside the minutemen. He was "all night long cleaning his gun and accoutrements." Apparently it made no difference when Adams, clapping him on the shoulder, said to him, "that is not our business; we belong to the cabinet." It was more to the point when it was pointed out to him that in risking his person he was doing exactly what Gage wanted; and his wavering mind was at last settled when he was told that a British officer had been asking for Clarke's *tavern*. By the time the crisis had almost come, Hancock was at last persuaded to make his escape.[1]

In the meantime, Dawes having arrived, Revere had set out again with him to alarm Concord. They were overtaken by a young Doctor Samuel Prescott (a Concord man who had been calling on his sweetheart in Lexington[2]), whom they found to be a "high son of Liberty." As they rode, Revere told his companions of his experience with the two officers, and his belief that still others were on the road before them. Nevertheless they went on, arranging to alarm every house, Prescott willingly helping them, and useful because he knew the people. As Revere expected, he came upon more officers; it was when he was again alone, the others having stayed to alarm a house. Seeing before him but two officers,

[1] Compare the deposition of William Munroe, already mentioned, with the recollections of Madam Scott, New England Historical and Genealogical Register, VIII, 188. After Hancock's death, his widow had married again, and in 1822 was a widow a second time. It must be said that her memories of two great men are disappointingly meager and frivolous.

[2] Shattuck's "History of Concord", p. 101.

as he thought, he called to his friends to come up: "there were two, & we would have them." [1] In an instant he was surrounded by four, and when young Prescott came up, the officers, with drawn pistols and emphatic oaths and threats, forced them to go through a pair of bars, which had been let down, into a pasture.[2]

"When we had got in, Mr. Prescot said 'put on,'" and taking the left, while Revere took to the right, jumped his horse over a low stone wall, and escaped. Revere had no such luck. Observing a small wood, he spurred for that, intending to leap from his horse and escape on foot; but when he reached it, out started six officers, who seized his bridle, and at the muzzle of their pistols made him dismount.

Some of his captors abused him much; later, he said, they insulted him, calling him rebel, which we do not consider as much of an insult as did he. But one of his captors was a gentleman, questioned him courteously, recognized his name, and played a game of bluff with Revere, at which the Yankee had the better. "He said . . . they were only waiting for some Deserters they expected down the Road: I told him I knew better, I knew what they were after; that I had alarmed the country all the way up, that their Boats were catch'd aground, and I should have 500 men there soon."

Surprised, these officers called their leader from the road, Major Mitchel of the 5th Regiment. His questions getting no better answer from Revere, he ordered his whole party to the road, and with them Revere and four other prisoners who now appeared from the bushes. These were Solomon Brown, Hancock's messenger to Concord,

[1] Crossed out in the original, but still legible.

[2] The traditional spot is now marked by a tablet.

and two other Lexington men; having fallen into the officers' ambush, they had waited here some hours. The fourth man was a harmless peddler. These Lexington men the officers had been questioning about Hancock and Adams,[1] and if they had a chance to tell Revere of this, it may well have been he who carried the news to the two leaders. Once in the road, the party started back toward Lexington, Revere being put in the care of a sergeant, who had orders to kill him if he attempted to escape. The Lexington men, dismounted and with the reins and girths of their horses cut, were presently dismissed; but Revere was taken nearer to the town, until the officers were halted by the sound of "a voley of Guns, which appeared to alarm them very much." The Major asked Revere the way to Cambridge, and then consulted with his subordinates.

Here we are nearest of all to an attempt to capture Hancock and Adams. This small party of mounted men might have seized the patriot leaders and rushed them away. But with Prescott escaped toward Concord, and Dawes vanished back toward Lexington, with Revere's story in their minds, and now this volley of alarm guns in their ears, they may well have felt that their mission had come to a fruitless end. It would appear from later evidence that they believed Revere's story of five hundred men assembling at Lexington; but even if they did not, the sound of the volley assured them that more armed men were on the green than they could safely meet with such distinguished prisoners. They may have had discretionary orders to take the Whig leaders, but if the project had been in their minds, they gave it up. The

[1] Elijah Sanderson's deposition of 1825. Elias Phinney's "History of the Battle of Lexington."

major gave Revere's good horse to the sergeant, cut the saddle and bridle from the man's tired nag, and let the prisoner go.

Taking a road that would avoid the town, the officers went to meet the expected troops. On his part, Revere went directly to the minister's house, where he found Adams and Hancock, the latter still undecided. His news, and the urgent advice of others, settled the matter. The two leaders of the Whigs started, Revere accompanying them, on the road to Burlington. Leaving them after a few miles, Revere rested for a little space, and then returned to Lexington to see what was yet to happen.[1]

Whether he again met Dawes that night, or what became of the other Boston messenger, we are not sure. Dawes escaped from the two officers who pursued him by a trick characteristic of the man. Riding at full speed into the next barnyard, he shouted as if to call the inmates of the house to his aid. His horse stopped so quickly that he fell and lost his watch; but though the house was empty his pursuers departed more quickly still, and he got safely away. The watch was later returned to him. But little more is known of his doings that night; Dawes is out of the story.[2]

[1] It is a mistake to say, as some have done, that Hancock and Adams were in a little wood near Lexington at the time of the shooting, and perhaps in sight of it. Revere's evidence to the contrary is sufficient, but see in addition the deposition of William Munroe, "I however conducted them to the north part of the town." For the further adventures of the two leaders, the salmon that they sent for for their dinner, and the spoiling of the meal by a frightened yokel, see Madam Scott's trivial reminiscences, referred to above.

[2] See as before, Henry Holland's "William Dawes and His Ride with Paul Revere."

XI

UPON Revere's arrival with his news, the alarm was at once given in Lexington, and the minutemen assembled. There were a hundred and thirty men that gathered,[1] under the leadership of John Parker. For an hour, from perhaps one o'clock to two, he stood with his men on Lexington green, and waited what might happen. Then as the night, though clear and bright, was cold, and as there came neither the British nor further news of them, he dismissed the company, with orders to be ready to assemble at the call of the drum. Perhaps at the moment of dismissal they fired the alarm volley heard by Revere and his captors. But then those whose homes were near by went to them; others stayed in the Buckman tavern, hard by the green, and apparently Parker was with them, waiting for news.[2]

But not planning. There is nothing to show, least of all in his actions, that he had planned to do anything more with his men than just to stand, in silent and indignant protest, while the regulars marched by to Concord. For Parker knew, as well as the men on Boston Common to whom Percy had spoken, that the only objective of any expedition which Gage would send out must be Concord, where alone were assembled stores enough to be called a military depot. The regulars were going through Lexington; Parker had no intention of stopping them, but he would protect the town and the women and children. Had the regulars arrived in the

[1] This included the men of the alarm list. See Charles Hudson's "History of the Town of Lexington", p. 142, *footnote*.

[2] For map of Lexington, see page 107.

night, as was expected, the minutemen might have remained unperceived in the place where they finally assembled, a hundred yards from the Concord road, ready on the spot if injury were offered. But there was surely no thought of disputing the passage, and apparently no consideration of what, in a larger military sense, was the best use of the company at this crisis. To send the women and children to safety, if need be under guard, and to put the rest of the company under the command of Colonel Barrett at Concord, was apparently not considered. It was not the function of a militia captain to decide the problem. Before now he should have received instructions from his colonel upon the point. But the colonel had given no thought to it, nor the generals, nor the Committee of Safety. And John Hancock, still polishing his weapons near by, the man who before long was to feel aggrieved that he was not appointed in Washington's place—he had no more notion of the generalship of the situation than to suppose that the proper thing to do was to stand in the open to be shot. If Samuel Adams had any ideas on the subject, he kept them to himself.[1]

[1] The only military man who ever expressed himself on this subject was Heath. But he, in his "Memoirs" of 1798, p. 12, was explicit. "This company continuing to stand so near to the road, after they had certain notice of the advancing of the British in force, was but a too much braving of danger; for they were sure to meet with insult, or injury, which they could not repel. Bravery, when called to action, should always take the strong ground on the basis of reason." No one else raised the same question, so far as I have seen, until Harold Murdock suggested, in 1923 (see his "Nineteenth of April, 1775", pp. 23–25), that "Parker acted under orders; that the post he took was not of his choosing. Samuel Adams, the great agitator, had been a guest of Parson Clark's for days, and he was the dynamo that kept the revolutionary machinery in motion . . . and now did he feel that the time had come to draw once more the British fire?"—as at the time of the Massacre. Mr. Murdock's argument has force; but Adams had no military authority over Parker. It seems more likely that when Adams

In that period of waiting and listening, and perhaps of dozing, the only events that might have roused suspicion were events that did not occur. Tradition says that as many as three messengers were sent down the Boston road, none of whom returned.[1] Instead of regarding this as suspicious, it was taken as confirming the idea that there had been a false alarm. Then suddenly Thaddeus Bowman, a fourth messenger, came galloping to the tavern with the news that the British were close at hand.

Bowman's word is said to have been supplemented by Benjamin Wellington, who came running in on foot. Parker gave the order to summon his men. The drum was beat and alarm guns were fired. There was starting from repose, the snatching of weapons, shouting, running, all in the early dawn. As William Munroe formed the men in two lines on the open green,[2] they were in plain view of the road.

It was just at this time that Revere and Hancock's clerk, returning from seeing the Whig leaders into safety, approached the tavern. At parson Clarke's house they

saw the machinery moving toward an outbreak, he made no effort to prevent it. Parker and his men, although enlisted militia, were planning to act exactly as civilians do when they claim the right to stand where they choose in spite of the police. They were not soldiers enough, as yet, to know how their mere appearance in arms would act upon the regulars who came upon them.

[1] See A. W. Bryant to this effect, "Lexington Historical Society's Proceedings", III, 146. Bryant is apparently quoting a person unknown, or else Lexington tradition.

[2] See William Munroe's deposition of 1825. Phinney's "History of the Battle of Lexington", reprint of 1875, p. 34. "Between daylight and sunrise, Capt. Thaddeus Bowman rode up and informed, that the regulars were near. The drum was then ordered to be beat, and I was commanded by Capt. Parker to parade the company, which I accordingly did, in two ranks, a few rods northerly of the meeting-house." Bowman's title of Captain, like Revere's title of Colonel, was given to him later. For Wellington's news, see Phinney, "History."

had been told that no troops were coming; but now they were met by a man "on a full Gallop" who called to them that the troops were "coming up the Rocks." The Rocks were in Menotomy, miles away; but next the two men were told that the regulars were close by. Appealed to by the clerk to help secure a trunk of Hancock's papers, Revere went with him to the tavern and "up Chamber", where out of the window Revere saw the British "very near, upon a full March." [1]

On the green there was confusion. Some who had no ammunition hastened to the meetinghouse for a supply, it is said,[2] though why they had none it would be hard to explain. Some, coming without arms, stood by as spectators.[3] There may have been two score of these. The highest American estimate of the militia in line was seventy. Perhaps the approaching regulars were seen by them, for some, it is said, wished to leave the ranks.[4] These statements are all from the depositions of fifty years later, which say further that Parker rebuked and threatened [5] his men, told them to stand fast, and warned

[1] Revere's "Letter."

[2] Ebenezer Munroe's deposition of 1825. Possibly the men had fired away as alarm a good deal of their powder. John Munroe's deposition says that they went to save the powder.

[3] Deposition of Elijah Sanderson, 1825.

[4] Deposition of Joseph Underwood, 1825.

[5] Depositions of John Munroe, Ebenezer Munroe, Nathan Munroe, and Joseph Underwood, all of 1825. In contrast with the depositions of 1775, which are good legal evidence, these late depositions are talkative and gossipy, do not confine themselves to the deponents' actual knowledge, and were aimed to bring out what each man could tell. It is therefore difficult to accept Parker's imputed words: "If they want to begin a war, let it begin here." These are said to have been cited by William Munroe at a muster of about 1820, the old sergeant adding, "For them is the *very words* Captain Parker said." Yet they do not appear in Munroe's deposition of 1825, and in fact are first to be found in writing in a letter of Theodore Parker (Captain Parker's grandson) in 1858.

them not to fire on the British. Elijah Sanderson deposed, " 'Twas all in the utmost haste." [1] At this period of confusion Revere and Hancock's clerk, carrying the trunk, passed through the militia, and heard the captain say, "Let the troops pass by, and don't molest them, without The[y] begin first." [2]

Begin what? Parker did not then realize that his drum and alarm guns had been taken as a challenge by the advancing officers, that the sight of his men would be as meat to a dog to the soldiers who had long stood the baiting of the Yankees in Boston. Not yet did he think of the disparity of numbers. He stood on his right to parade on the green where the men of Lexington had drilled since first the place was a town. It was brave, but it was not war—there was no war as yet.

See "Source Problems in United States History", pp. 9 and 53. The text above gives as much credence as seems right, to the stories of old men.

[1] Deposition of Elijah Sanderson, 1825.

[2] Revere's "Deposition."

XII

BUT war was coming. For while Revere was riding and the alarm was spreading, and while the Lexington men had almost decided that the news was false, Gage's "secret" expedition had got itself under way. Before moonrise the troops had marched down to what was called the "foot of the Common", which was at or near the vanished Fox Hill of the old maps. The tide was low,[1] but there must have been water enough for the embarkation. The spot was near the westerly side of our present Park Square, and according to Walling's map of 1859, which shows much of the modern filling as merely projected, Edward Everett Hale was right in saying that the course of the boats was about the line of our present Arlington Street. The distance was at least a mile and a quarter, and the landing was on swampy ground at Phips' or Lechmere's Farm or Point, now East Cambridge. The place is now so filled and built up that nothing can be traced of the old topography; but it is known that the courthouse of to-day stands near the site of the old farmhouse.[2]

With the expedition was Lieutenant Barker, the grumbling diarist, whose jottings, with those of De Berniere, are the only first-hand British unofficial accounts of the experiences of the detachment. The landing may have

[1] Revere's "Letter": "It was then young flood." Note that in Pelham's map an arm of deeper water reached through the flats almost to Fox Hill.

[2] The place was earlier called Phips's Farm, and later Lechmere's Point, the latter being the modern name as a terminus of electric cars. Richard Lechmere, who owned the farm in 1775, acquired it by marrying the daughter of Spencer Phips. See "Memorial History of Boston", III, 65 and 105–107.

been completed anywhere between eleven and twelve, on what Barker calls Cambridge Marsh. "After getting over the Marsh where we were wet up to the knees, we were halted in a dirty road and stood there 'till two oclock in the morning waiting for provisions to be brought from the boats and to be divided, and which most of the Men threw away, having carried some with 'em. At 2 oclock we began our March by wading through a very long ford up to our middles." [1] The hour of their starting is more likely one, to give time to reach Lexington at sunrise;[2] but in the slow start the British showed themselves to be amateurs in the art of war. Had they saved two hours, or even one, they would have passed through Lexington before daylight, could have started back to Boston earlier, and many events of the day would have been different.

[1] "The British in Boston", pp. 31–32. (Also in *Atlantic Monthly* for 1877, Vol. 39, p. 398.) Barker's story of the Nineteenth extends to page 37, and henceforward will be referred to without footnote. Barker's diary was chanced upon in Philadelphia, by Miss Elizabeth Ellery Dana, but when, after buying the MS., she examined it she found it "deficient in having no account of the expedition to Lexington and Concord. The only explanation of this was that the writer was too busy to describe it. A closer inspection, however, showed that the diary was paged in tiny figures, so small and faded that they had been overlooked. Four pages (two sheets) were thus found to be missing. Inquiry was made of Miss Burbeck [the original owner] who reported that she had nothing more. Miss Dana then wrote to Colonel Gardiner [who had the Burbeck papers for study] asking if by any possibility the missing leaves had come to him among the Burbeck papers. To her great joy they were found and returned to her, bringing the longed-for-narrative of the nineteenth of April—the fullest and most important part of the whole Diary." Colonial Society's Publications, v, p. 52. The diary was printed with some abbreviations in the *Atlantic Monthly* for 1877, and with more fullness in 1924 under the title "The British in Boston", edited by Harold Murdock. In six months the edition was out of print, and unless the student is fortunate enough to have access to a copy of it, he must consult the *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 39, pp. 389–401, 544–554.

[2] The Richard Pope MS. also says two o'clock. De Berniere says twelve, which is as much too early as Barker's seems too late.

Smith's route can be easily traced. On Pelham's map of 1777 the main road that he followed is called Charlestown Lane; later it was called Milk Row, and later still Milk Street, Somerville. To-day it is called Somerville Avenue, and Smith followed it to modern Elm Street, by passing through which, as well as Beech Street, he joined in North Cambridge, about a mile north of the colleges, the Boston road to Menotomy and Lexington, the two towns which he could not avoid in going to Concord. This road is modern Massachusetts Avenue. At the "foot of the rocks" in Menotomy the road diverged from the modern route, and climbing over the hill, joined it again a half-mile farther on.[1]

In Menotomy stood the tavern where the committees of safety and supplies had met the previous day, and where Gerry, Orne, and Lee had peacefully gone to sleep. It was well past midnight when they were roused by the approach of Smith's detachment. Half-dressed, they stood at a window and watched the march of the troops, until, when half the column had passed, an officer and a file of men turned toward the tavern. Not until then had it occurred to the Whigs that, the house being known as a meeting-place of the committees, they were in danger. Waiting for nothing, they hurried downstairs. "Gerry in his perturbation being on the point of opening the front door in their faces, when the landlord

[1] F. W. Coburn, in his "Battle of April 19, 1775", has minutely traced the route from house to house, telling the traditional stories of the roused inhabitants. At places the troops asked for water, or inquired the meaning of lights at that late hour. At the Foot of the Rocks a shoemaker and his wife were said to have been casting bullets when disturbed, but passed their occupation off as the brewing of herb tea.—The name, Foot of the Rocks, is carved near this place on a stone by the roadside; this may have been a part of the original rocky formation, but is on the modern road, not the old one.

cried out to him, 'For God's sake don't open that door!' and led them to the back of the house, whence they escaped into the cornfield, before the officer had posted his guards about the doors. There was nothing to conceal them from view in the broad field but the corn stubble which had been left the previous fall a foot or two high, and that was little protection in the bright moonlight. Gerry stumbled and fell, and called out to his friend, 'Stop, Orne; stop for me till I can get up; I have hurt myself.' This suggested the idea, and they all threw themselves flat on the ground, and, concealed by the stubble, remained there, half-clothed as they had left their chamber, till the troops passed on. Col. Lee never recovered from the effects of that midnight exposure; he died in less than a month from that night." [1]

At a halt upon his march, Smith "called his Officers together, and gave Orders, that the Troops should not fire, unless fired upon." Soon after this, probably dissatisfied with his progress, he "detached six Companies of Light Infantry, under the Command of Major Pitcairn, to take Possession of two Bridges on the other Side of Concord." [2] But Pitcairn had not long started in advance of the rest of the troops, when Smith became aware, by the sound of bells and guns, that the country was being alarmed against him. Cooper, imagining the scene in his "Lionel Lincoln", has overdone the din and clatter,

[1] S. A. Smith, "West Cambridge on the Nineteenth of April, 1775", Boston, pp. 15–17. See also J. T. Austin's "Life of Gerry", 1, 66*ff*.

[2] These two quotations, and the statement that Smith heard the signals, are from General Gage's "Circumstantial Account", a broadside published by him late in April, to set forth his side of the case. A copy was sent by him to Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, April 29. The foundation of the report is in Smith's (and Percy's) written reports to Gage. (See "Source Problems in United States History", pp. 16–18; and Percy's "Letters.")

for houses were scattered, villages were few, and the church bells (as Gordon warns his correspondent in England) "are only small-sized bells, (one in a Parish) just sufficient to notify to the people the time for attending worship." [1] But Smith sent a messenter to Gage, telling of the general alarm and asking for support. It was the wisest thing that he did that day; without it, neither he nor any of his men would have returned to Boston.

As Pitcairn, pursuing his quickened march, probably also became aware of the alarm, he took measures to prevent any positive warning from being carried to Lexington. His extreme advance-guard, the *point* as it is called to-day, was, as is usual and proper, proceeding along the sides of the road rather than the middle; and concealing themselves from any one that approached, the soldiers closed in upon him and made him prisoner. Thus one by one the men sent out from Lexington for news were gathered in, until as Thaddeus Bowman, likewise scouting, approached the marching column, his horse, perceiving soldiers sitting on either side of the road, refused to pass them. The unsuspicious Bowman was still endeavoring to urge his horse forward, when he saw Pitcairn's detachment coming toward him. Turning about, he galloped to give the alarm.[2]

Soon after this, and perhaps not far from Lexington, Pitcairn was met by Revere's captors, now returning toward Boston; for it must have been they who, according to Gage's account, gave warning that five hundred men were assembled at Lexington to oppose them. Certainly

[1] Gordon's "Letter."

[2] The main fact of Bowman's escape is given in Ebenezer Munroe's deposition of 1825; the details, apparently from local tradition, are in Phinney's "History" of the same date. "History of the Battle at Lexington", reprint of 1875, pages 18 and 36.

Revere's bluff had succeeded. Galloping up to his advance-guard, Pitcairn was told of another incident—that a provincial had snapped his piece at the two officers of the guard.—Gordon construed this as a warning to come no farther; the attempt to fire was meant as an alarm for the Americans.[1]

But Pitcairn, believing that his men had been assaulted, halted his troops, and ordered them to prime and load. As this was the usual slow process it is possible that by the time it was finished Smith, with his men, was close at hand.[2] According to Gage, Pitcairn now gave directions to his troops "on no account to fire, nor even to attempt it without Orders." And thus prepared, the light infantry moved forward onto Lexington green. From the warnings, Pitcairn must have expected to find a force larger than his own, waiting in hostile array. And Lieutenants Adair and Sutherland of the advance-

[1] For this paragraph see Gage's "Circumstantial Account" (Force's "Archives", IV, ii, 435); Smith's report to Gage; Gordon's "Letter." As to the firing reported by the advance guard, Gordon wrote, "The simple truth, I take to be this, which I received from one of the prisoners at Concord in free conversation, one James Marr, a native of Aberdeen, in Scotland, of the Fourth Regiment, who was upon the advanced-guard, consisting of six, besides a sergeant and corporal: They were met by three men on horseback, before they got to the meeting-house a good way; an officer bid them stop; to which it was answered, you had better turn back, for you shall not enter the Town; when the said three persons rode back again, and at some distance one of them offered to fire, but the piece flashed in the pan without going off. I asked Marr if he could tell if the piece was designed at the soldiers, or to give an alarm? He could not say which."

The reader may need to be told that when a flintlock flashes in the pan the powder in the pan is ignited without setting off the powder in the barrel. It shows by night a little flash of fire, by day a little puff of smoke.

[2] The Richard Pope MS. states, "This information [i. e. that there was a large body of militia waiting in Lexington] being confirmed by several, he halted till Colonel Smyth came up;—The whole loaded till [sic] they were positively forbidden to fire, without orders."

guard, with a fresh memory of the man who, they supposed, had tried to shoot them, must have been in instant expectation of the whistling of bullets. There were in attendance on Pitcairn some of the mounted officers who had captured Revere.[1]

The British had lost so much time that it was now practically broad day, being just at sunrise.

As the road to Concord entered Lexington, it passed between two hills, on which later Percy set his cannon, and going always level, reached the green, which is still one of the most beautiful commons in Massachusetts. The main road continued almost straight on; but the

[1] Various depositions tell that Pitcairn was not alone. William Munroe (1825) brings Smith and Pitcairn on the ground together, which is of course wrong; it is not believed that Smith was there at that time. Of the 1775 deponents, John Robbins says, "three officers in their front on horseback." Thomas Fessenden says practically the same. Benjamin Tidd and Joseph Abbot, "some of the regulars who were mounted on horses." Levi Mead and Levi Harrington, "some of the regulars on horseback, whom we took to be officers." Elijah Sanderson deposed in 1825, "several mounted British officers were forward; I think, five." Gordon's "Letter" says, "three or four of the regular officers"; Warren's diary, "several of the officers." The Richard Pope MS. would certainly put Major Mitchell and the other captors of Revere with the advance, for it says, "On the rebels breaking, Major Mitchell and 7 or 8 officers charged them, with very great danger from our fire." This early part of the Pope MS. is so evidently mess-room gossip that it is not good authority, but I cannot forbear concluding from it that Lieutenant Sutherland, who already conceived himself fired at, was an excitable person. The MS. says, "The Horse of Lieutenant Sutherland of the 38 Regt. ran away with him into a wood, where a large body of the rebels lay concealed, who fired shot at him; he, however, got back safe." The only way to explain this is by considering it an exaggeration of the story of William Tidd (deposition of 1825) who was pursued by an officer, sprang over a pair of bars, and shot at him, "upon which he immediately returned to the main body." Thus it would seem evident that at least one officer with Pitcairn had not a cool enough head for such delicate duty. It is Smith's report to Gage that tells that Lieutenants Adair and Sutherland were fired at by a provincial, "whose gun flashed and did not go off." Lieutenant Sutherland was wounded at the North Bridge.

road to Bedford branched to the right; and in the angle thus made stood in 1775 the barnlike meetinghouse, just beyond which was its free-standing belfry. Behind

Lexington Green at Sunrise, April 19th, 1775.

Showing the more important buildings, and the approximate positions of the troops and minute-men.

these and towards the right, with less than a dozen houses standing at its borders, was the open green on which Pitcairn saw Parker's little company. Drawn up, says

De Berniere, "in divisions, with intervals as wide as the front of the divisions", they may have been in two platoons, with a space between them—all to make a little show of strength, like their arrangement in two ranks instead of the customary three. To one side stood a group of spectators, not more than forty. And these were the dangerous militia! Pitcairn was a humane man, and he must have felt relieved at the simplicity of his task.

While the troops marched directly towards the minutemen, Pitcairn and the mounted officers galloped round the meetinghouse, which put him on the flank of both forces. Full of confidence in his light infantry, and scornful, perhaps, of the little force against him, his thought appears to have been to disarm the provincials. Several of the contemporary accounts agree that Pitcairn ordered the minutemen to lay down their arms.[1]

And in the meantime the troops, shouting or huzzaing (which seems to have been a habit encouraged among them) ran forward—at the double, say later writers, but those who were on the ground indicate a disorderly manner. True to their training, they may have kept something of their proper formation, but they must have appeared excited and over-eager. "And rushed furiously . . . ." deposed Captain Parker.[2]

[1] See Robbins' deposition of 1775, De Berniere's and Clarke's narratives, and Gage's account. Stiles implies the same. Of the depositions of 1825, John and William Munroe, and William Tidd, speak of the order to lay down the arms.

[2] There is much evidence as to the shouting and huzzaing. Thomas Fessenden deposed, 1775, "The regulars kept huzzaing till he had finished brandishing his sword." Thomas Rice Willard, 1775, "Then the officers made an huzza, and the private soldiers succeeded them." "Then the Regulars huzzaed," wrote Gordon in his "Letter." William Draper deposed, 1775, "The regular troops made an huzza, and ran towards Captain Parker's company." Elijah Sander-

And what was Parker's thought now? Steadier than his own men, who were still hurriedly assembling,[1] watching the oncoming regulars spread out to a front of two platoons,[2] to form a front as wide as his own, hearing their already triumphant shouts, and seeing that that triumph was sure because of very numbers—he must have seen at last the danger to his men, felt his responsibility for their lives, realized how futile would be any resistance. There was only one thing to do, and he did it. He gave the order to disperse and not to fire.[3]

son, 1775, "shouted aloud, run, and fired." The captured British officer, Edward Thoroton Gould, deposed, 1775, "Our troops rushed on, shouting, huzzaing, previous to the firing."

[1] John Warren's diary states, "assembled, but in a hurried and confused manner." Deposition of 1775, by Nathaniel Parkhurst and thirteen others, "Some of the company were coming to the parade and others had reached it." See also the depositions of 1825 by Elijah Sanderson and William Tidd.

[2] Doolittle's print shows the British in a front of two platoons or companies. This was the proper formation for the occasion, the troops being then ready for volley-firing. To form a line from a column, the rear men had to advance at the double.

[3] That doughty partisan, Frank Warren Coburn, says of Parker's deposition, "Taken altogether, his deposition is the most unfortunate one of all for us [that is, for Lexington people] to consider." Now that a hundred and fifty years have elapsed, there is no need for such intense local patriotism. In the light of the common sense of the situation, it ought to be plain nowadays that Parker saw that a mistake had been made, and tried to rectify it. Viewed thus, much of the high-flown language of past praise becomes empty words. For instance, Charles Hudson's statement, "They stood there, not merely as soldiers, but as citizens, nay, almost as statesmen, having the destiny of the country in their hands." His argument is that their statesmanlike duty was not to fire first. Better not to have drawn the fire of the British at all. The lives sacrificed in that unnecessary encounter could have been better used against the British on their retreat. (See Coburn's "Fiction and Truth about the Battle on Lexington Common", p. 19; and Hudson's "History of Lexington", 1, 149.)

Parker's simple words cover the whole subject. "[I] ordered our Militia to meet on the common in said Lexington, to consult what to do, and concluded not to be discovered, nor to meddle nor make with said Regular Troops (if they should approach) unless they should insult us; and upon their sudden ap-

The Lexington company began to break ranks.[1] Willingly and quickly some may have started, slowly and sullenly others, while stubbornly standing still was a small remainder—so it all was, there can be no doubt. Not a man of those who stood there had raised his gun to fire. No man who had any wisdom would have fired a shot while his comrades were under the very muzzles of the British.[2]

It was not to Pitcairn's purpose that the muskets should be carried away. He was turning to order his

proach, I immediately ordered our Militia to disperse and not to fire." For he had been discovered, and that being so, it was for the regulars to say whether they would meddle or make.

[1] Of this there is ample proof. Within a few days such men as could be assembled, sixty-two in all, actors or spectators, swore to the depositions which here have been so frequently referred to. The whole purpose of these depositions was to establish two things, first that the company was dispersing, second that the British fired first. It seems plain that both of these were established. Certainly every man of the sixty-two declared that the company began to break ranks before the regulars fired.

The depositions are to be found in various places; see the Bibliography. F. W. Coburn, in one of his books upon the battle, states that certain men who made deposition in 1825 had declined to do so in 1775 because they did not like the statements as made. Of this of course there is not the slightest proof, nor even evidence. After the Nineteenth the depositions were taken hurriedly, with the purpose of sending them to England on a special ship. With the siege of Boston then in progress and very likely some of the Lexington men on duty at Cambridge, with the whole province upset, it is not probable that every man present at Lexington could be found to make a statement. Of the possible hundred eyewitnesses of the shooting, the congressional committee may well have been satisfied with sixty-two, a far greater proportion than they took the trouble to secure for the Concord depositions.

[2] Various contemporary writers made this same statement. See the "Annual Register for 1775," vol. 18, p. 126, an article possibly by Edmund Burke. "Indeed it seems evident, that a single company of militia, standing, it may be said, under the muzzles of our soldiers' guns, would have been sufficient pledges to prevent any outrage from their friends and neighbors in the adjoining houses. ." The writer, though an Englishman, concluded that the troops fired first.

men to disarm the provincials, when he believed he saw a gun from behind a wall flash in the pan. Other shots were then fired, he could not see by whom, but had no doubt of the obedience of his own men. Next there came a volley from the first platoon of his troops—and the mischief was done. Though he tried strenuously to stop the firing, nothing could prevent other regulars from emptying their guns, once the work had begun. There was more shooting, there was charging; one provincial who would not stir was bayoneted to death. There was a feeble response from scattering guns, and Pitcairn found that his horse was wounded. The men, says Barker, "were so wild they cou'd hear no orders." When at last they were under control, eight Americans were dead. Of those who escaped, ten were wounded.[1]

How had it happened? It can never be positively stated. Others may have thought they saw, like Pitcairn, a gun flash in the pan, and may have acted on the thought. If the first shot came from some young or reckless or irresponsible man, it seems right to believe that he was not among the Americans, who for months had been told, even by their ministers, that they were not to fire first. But among the British there were hot-headed young officers, there were men who hated and despised the Yankees exceedingly, there were green and nervous men who had never seen a fight. There is evidence to show that the first shot was from a pistol. Revere says so in his "Letter," and Gordon, who had talked with him personally, quotes him; Revere also saw the smoke of this first shot "in front of the Troops", as he

[1] This paragraph depends for its facts and sequence on Stiles' analysis; see p. 127. For Gage's statement, see p. 124.

says in his deposition. The contemporary account in the *Essex Gazette* says the first fire was from pistols.[1] Now the pistols on the ground can only have been, speaking ordinarily, in the possession of the mounted officers, for the officers of foot all carried guns. It is not surprising, then, to find that Benjamin Tidd and Joseph Abbott testified in 1775, "the regulars fired, first a few guns which we took to be pistols, from some of the regulars who were mounted on horses." Perhaps some young blood thought to hasten the minutemen away by firing in the air; perhaps a pistol went off accidentally.[2] But one shot being fired, the rest followed. It is to be remembered that this force, the light infantry, were not accustomed to act together, and that Pitcairn, in spite of his uniform of a major, was a stranger to them and had had no time to establish his personal authority. "Tho' he struck his staff or Sword downwards with all earnestness as the signal to forbear," he could not control the men.[3]

So, in this almost chance encounter, the first blood was shed. Gage might warn his leaders, and Smith and Pitcairn might caution their officers and men, Parker might hope neither to meddle nor make—but men were killed. The lack of foresight of provincial committees and new-made generals, the hopefulness of a whole province that things would settle themselves somehow, resulted in this, that these Lexington men had been made martyrs. But that was much. The troops little supposed

[1] "Upon which the troops huzza'd, and immediately one or two officers discharged their pistols." *Essex Gazette*, Vol. VII, No. 352, April 25, 1775.

[2] The recent film "America" made this suggestion pictorially, as its only real contribution to Lexington history.

[3] Reverend Ezra Stiles' "Literary Diary", I, 605.

that they had made the name of Lexington so memorable that for generations to come, Americans would quicken at the sound of it. The redcoats did not even suspect that, drop for drop, they would pay that very day for the blood they had spilled.

XIII

HISTORIANS have of late avoided judgment upon the controversial points concerning the firing at Lexington, and for writers of general histories that may be the simple and easy attitude of the future.[1] The writer of this more detailed study has, however, ventured to indicate his opinion upon those points of past controversy, which have been debated more than most questions in American military history. It seems right, in the following sections, to weigh the evidence, complicated and contradictory as it is.

We must consider that this evidence all concerns an action which could have taken but a few minutes, the details of which could have been seen only by the minutemen on the one hand (including the little group of standers-by) and on the other by only the foremost British officers and the leading British company.

The disputes have centered about three points, the first two being entirely American, namely, whether the minutemen were dispersing when fired upon, and whether they returned the British fire. The third question is as to whether British or Americans fired first.

Taking the American questions first, which of the eyewitnesses left any account? With quick foresight, the provincial congress, on April 22, appointed a committee of which Elbridge Gerry was chairman and Colonel James Barrett of Concord was a member, to "take depositions, *in perpetuam*", concerning the fighting

[1] "It is impossible to say which side fired first and it is a question to-day of no historical importance." J. T. Adams, "Revolutionary New England", p. 419.

at Lexington and Concord, and elsewhere on the Nineteenth, to be sent to London on the first ship from Salem, in order to forestall any incorrect story from Gage. On the following day were taken the depositions of Concord and Lincoln men who were at Concord bridge; on the twenty-third, twenty-fourth, and twenty-fifth, the Lexington depositions. The depositions of two captured British privates were taken on the twenty-third; that of Lieutenant Gould, also captured, was written on the twentieth and sworn to on the twenty-fifth.

The Lexington depositions, as has already been said, were designed to prove two things: first, that the minutemen were dispersing when fired on; second, that until then they had not fired a shot. Each separate deposition covers these two points and then stops. With too great wisdom, it would seem, the politicians who managed this matter left it only to be inferred that there was a return fire, which seems a strange bit of caution in view of the fact that in the Concord depositions it was boldly admitted that the British fire had been returned. "My detachment," Colonel Barrett deposed, "then returned the fire, which killed and wounded several of the King's troops."

It may be that it was with a purpose to make the victims of the first bloodshed appear extremely helpless and innocent, that the fact of the return fire was obscured. But whatever the intention of this unnecessary precaution, Lexington fretted under it for more than a hundred years. The natural inference from practically all of the depositions is that there was a return fire[1]; yet making

[1] John Robbins deposed, " . . . Captain Parker's men, I believe, had not then fired a gun." Benjamin Tidd and Joseph Abbott, " . . And then the said regulars fired a volley or two before any guns were fired by the Lexington com-

no inference at all, American historians accepted them merely on their face value, and commonly told the story of the shooting as a massacre of dispersed and unresisting militia, in contrast with the story of Concord fight, where the provincials were in the attitude of attack. Indeed, such was the tale that was generally spread. John Winthrop, professor at Harvard, wrote within a few weeks of the fight that the attack at Concord "was the first opposition they [the British] met with." [1] A year later Jonas Clarke, minister of Lexington, wrote in his printed "Narrative", "upon the most careful enquiry, it appears, that but very few of our people fired at all." It is no wonder, then, that in our early books the Lexington men were not represented as resisting. In Jedediah Morse's "Geography Made Easy" of 1814, the text says only, "At Lexington the militia were collected on a green, to oppose the excursion of the British forces, and were fired upon by the troops, when eight men were killed on the spot. The militia were dispersed." And as late as 1833, in the "Traveller's Own Book", by Bishop Davenport, no more was said than "in this town the first blood was shed in that revolution that produced our republic." So general was the belief that the killing at Lexington was an unprovoked slaughter of unresisting men, that when Concord men, in those early days, fell in with the general habit of claiming for their town the "first forcible resistance" to the British, they are

pany." Nathaniel Mullikin and thirty-three others, "Not a gun was fired by any person on the regulars, to our knowledge, before they fired on us." Nathaniel Parkhurst and thirteen others, "The regulars fired on the company, before a gun was fired by any of our company on them." All these statements imply that the Americans fired in retaliation.

[1] Letter to Richard Price, June 6, 1775. 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XVII, 290.

not to be considered as intentionally slighting the claims of a sister town.

But when, in 1824, on welcoming Lafayette to Concord, those words were publicly used and generally printed, there was considerable resentment against them in Lexington. The result was the depositions of 1825, already freely quoted here. In them the survivors of the fight were, as Coburn wrote, "induced to try again." [1] Of those depositions it may readily be said that they established that the Lexington men did give some kind of a return fire to the British.

But that they established more, and particularly that they proved that the Lexington company stood in line to receive and return the British fire, cannot successfully be claimed. On that slight basis there was indeed built up a story of the fight which completely ignored much of the earlier material. Pictures were made which changed the popular idea of the shooting. Yet no matter how definite may be one or two of the later depositions, it is unscientific to use them, made fifty years after the event, against sworn statements made within a week of it.

Often enough the historian must accept the recollections of old men in lieu of anything better, but he knows how undependable is an old man's memories of his youth. In his age John Adams lamented that his memory, though apparently clear, nevertheless was deceiving him. In the eighteen-forties the stories of the survivors of Bunker Hill, gathered for publication, were suppressed, they were so glaringly impossible.[2] The memories of soldiers of the

[1] Coburn uses this phrase in connection with Sanderson's second deposition, on page 48 of "Fiction and Truth about the Battle on Lexington Common", 1918.

[2] 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, x, 473–490, especially 480–481.

Civil War, when compared with their own reports of the same events, written immediately afterward, show memory to be an uncertain support. And the question of memory versus historian is very clearly shown by Charles Francis Adams 2d, himself a historian but also a veteran of the Civil War. In talk with John C. Ropes, the historian of that struggle, says Adams, "I spoke from memory of things which happened thirty-four years before, and I have little doubt that I was altogether wrong. In any case, my recollection militated strongly against the result of his study of the facts, and he sharply questioned me. My answers were apparently not satisfactory; as he declared in reply, 'I don't believe you were there at all!'. . . I was amused, as well as staggered in my faith in my own memory. It never occurred to me that he could mean to offend; and moreover, I felt that he was probably right. The chances of his being so were in any event so great that I felt no inclination to set up my recollection of thirty-four years' standing against his thorough study of the case." [1]

The reader will note that the present monograph uses late documents as illustrative or corroborative, but never in contradiction to the earlier. And the reader, with the general statements as to memory in mind, will be able to see in the Lexington situation, about 1820, a state of community feeling which could not fail to have its unconscious influence upon the memories of its old fighting men.

The controversy which arose was unfortunate. Concord and Lexington men both wrote in defence of their opinions. Not even the gentle rebuke of Emerson in 1835 had influence on the dispute.[2] But it has so completely died

[1] 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XIII, 213–214.

[2] "These poor farmers who came up that day to defend their soil acted from

out among readers and thinkers that there was no protest when in 1923 Harold Murdock published his penetrating and witty "Historic Doubts on the Battle of Lexington", in his "Nineteenth of April, 1775." [1] There can be no answer to his arguments.

So much, then, for the two American questions.[2] It is a mistake to suppose that the minutemen were not dispersing when fired upon, or that more than a few of them fired in return. Coburn collected the names of seven that fired, with a possible eighth; but most of these fired when retreating or under cover.[3]

The remaining question is whether the British fired

the simplest instincts. They did not know it was a deed of fame they were doing. These men did not babble of glory; they never dreamed their children would contend who had done the most." This, referring to the Acton controversy, may well be extended to cover the Lexington dispute. See Emerson's "Historical Discourse."

[1] Murdock's analysis of the evidence is complete. Perhaps his most interesting service is the study of the pictorial growth of the Lexington legend. That Murdock's book is still needed is shown by a recent school history, in which the fight at Concord is not mentioned, the shooting at Lexington becomes a battle, and a picture shows the Lexington minutemen fighting in line, with the background alone taken from Doolittle's contemporary engraving.

[2] Another Lexington witness who made a late statement was Levi Harrington, a spectator of the fight when in his fourteenth year. In 1775 he testified as to the shooting and the dispersing. In 1846 he wrote a letter containing his recollections, which so far as I know is not in print. According to Coburn, who used it, it contains details as to the death of Jonas Parker, similar to those given by William Monroe. But according to the story which Harrington told Gordon in 1775, he could not have seen any of the events after the first few guns were fired, for then, "hearing the bullets whistle, he ran off, and saw no more of the affair." See Gordon's "Letter."

[3] The heroism of Jonas Parker at Lexington is always to be remembered. He fired at the British from his place in the line, would not retreat though wounded, and was bayoneted while trying to reload his gun. Besides his name, Coburn gives the names of Solomon Brown, Ebenezer Lock, Ebenezer Munroe, Jr., Corporal John Munroe, Nathan Munroe, Lieutenant William Tidd, and possibly Benjamin Sampson.

first. Here again there is much testimony, of which only the contemporary need be considered.

The American eyewitnesses' depositions have been reviewed. One and all, whether earlier or later (and this is to include four controversial testimonies gathered by Ezra Ripley in 1827), they declare that the British fired first.[1]

Of contemporary statements, from material gathered soon after the event, there are several written by educated men—preponderatingly by ministers.

The shortest is the diary of the Reverend John Marrett, minister of Lexington's neighboring town of Woburn, well acquainted with the men of Lexington. Of the action of the regulars he simply wrote, "they hazzard & then fired as our men had turned their backs." [2]

The second is the "Narrative" of the Reverend Jonas Clarke, minister of Lexington, who was not on the ground at the time of the shooting, but arrived to witness the exultant departure of the troops. A year later he published his account, the almost legal terms of which, and the evident desire to be exact, have often been remarked upon. It bears out every detail of the depositions.

> For, no sooner did they come in sight of our company, but one of them, supposed to be an officer of rank, was heard to say to the troops, "Damn them, we will have them!"—Upon which the troops shouted aloud, huzza'd, and rushed furiously towards our men.—About the same time, three officers (supposed to be Col. Smith, Major Pitcairn and another officer) advanced, on horse back, to the front of the body, and coming within 5 or 6 rods

[1] See Phinney's "History of the Battle at Lexington"; Ripley's "History of the Fight at Concord."

[2] Contained in Samuel Dunster's "Henry Dunster and his Descendants", 84.

of the militia, one of them cried out, "ye villians [sic], ye Rebels, disperse; Damn you, disperse!" or words to this effect. One of them (whether the same, or not, is not easily determined) said, "Lay down your arms, Damn you, why don't you lay down your arms!"—The second of these officers, about this time, fired a pistol towards the militia, as they were dispersing.—The foremost, who was within a few yards of our men, brandishing his sword, and then pointing towards them, with a loud voice said, to the troops, "Fire!—By God, fire!"—which was instantly followed by a discharge of arms from the said troops, succeeded by a very heavy and close fire upon our party, dispersing, so long as any of them were within reach.[1]

The next is the diary of John Warren, the best of the many diaries which (their writers recognizing the importance of the events) were begun on April 19. Most of these diaries are brief, incomplete, and founded (so far as events of the Nineteenth are concerned) upon exaggerated rumor. Most were by uneducated men; but John Warren was a physician, the brother of Joseph Warren, the Whig leader. His account tallies interestingly with those of Gordon and Stiles, for it gives the exact words that Gordon puts into the mouths of the officers, and it has Stiles' story that Pitcairn saw a man snapping a gun while at a distance from the field. As it begins a connected journal of events, it seems to antedate both these other accounts. Warren's account is short and little known; I give it as it stands in the damaged manuscript in the Massachusetts Historical Society.[2] The reader must supply his own punctuation,

[1] Clarke's "Opening of the War of the Revolution, 19th of April, 1775. A Brief Narrative, etc."

[2] I am following a MS. copy which is with the original, collated by me with the worn and faded sheet.

and will note the correspondence here with earlier statements.

The Minute Men of the Town of Lexington in number about 130 assembled upon the Common near the Meeting-House, having waited some time after the Evening being misty and having now their . . . ready to attend . . . half an hour after the drums beat and about . . . immediately assembled but with Hurry in a confused manner, the Regulars came in and upon finding the Number great the Capt ordered his Men to disperse for their Safety. Several of the officers came up upon the fighting ground together to the Men, one cried out You damned rebels lay down your arms, another stop you rebels a third disperse you rebels. Some dispersed but a few continued in a military Position, on seeing which Major Pitcairn upon the Plea it seems of some Person's snapping a Gun or Pistol at the Regulars without its going off whilst they were at some distance from a [the?] company fired his pistol at the same time giving the Word of Command fire, which was instantly obeyed and eight persons were killed.

It will be noted that in this account not Pitcairn but other officers give orders to the militia. For this one sentence Gordon's "Letter" is identical; but being longer, and containing much more matter, being also the work of a gatherer of evidence, it seems right to follow the usual rule in such cases,[1] and consider the Gordon "Letter" the later. The Warren diary would therefore be written before May 17, when Gordon dated his letter.

This itself is the next contemporary document. Its origin has already been stated: Gordon, minister of Roxbury, not satisfied with the depositions, came to Lexington for the sole purpose of finding out the facts. In many cases he names the source of his material, whether

[1] This rule is applied in Biblical criticism.

Lexington men, or British prisoners, or Paul Revere. After quoting these at length, he gives his conclusion as follows.

I shall not trouble you with more particulars, but give you the substance as it lies in my own mind, collected from the persons whom I examined for my own satisfaction. The Lexington Company upon seeing the Troops, and being of themselves so unequal a match for them, were deliberating for a few moments what they should do, when several dispersing of their own heads, the Captain soon ordered the rest to disperse for their own safety. Before the order was given, three or four of the regular officers, seeing the company as they came up on the rising ground on this side [1] the meeting, rode forward one or more, round the meeting-house, leaving it on the right hand, and so came upon them that way; upon coming up one cried out, "you damned rebels, lay down your arms;" another, "stop, you rebels," a third, "disperse, you rebels," &c. Major Pitcairn, I suppose, thinking himself justified by Parliamentary authority to consider them as rebels, perceiving that they did not actually lay down their arms, observing that the generality were going off, while a few continued in their military position, and apprehending that there could be no great hurt in killing a few such Yankees, which might probably, according to the notions that had been instilled into him by the tory party, of the Americans being poltrons, end all the contest, gave the command to fire, then fired his own pistol, and so set the whole affair agoing.

It will be seen that this account of Gordon's, founded on personal questioning of participants on both sides, agrees with the depositions of a few weeks earlier. With Warren's diary it brings in the question of Pitcairn's responsibility, and this must now be examined here,

[1] *I. e.*, the Watertown side (the easterly) from which Gordon wrote. The "meeting" was the common name for the meetinghouse.

using for the purpose only one other American authority.

For no one can safely cite the official American accounts which were published by the Provincial Congress at about this time. They were full of horror at an event so new in the history of Massachusetts. Compared with General Gage's "Circumstantial Account", which is the utterance of a seasoned soldier, the American "Narrative of the Excursions and Ravages", as well as the other proclamations of the same date,[1] are excited, extreme, and political. The general tone of the newspaper reports in the Salem and Worcester papers,[2] is very partisan. Adding nothing to what we have already studied, they bristle with accusations. The official reports of Gage and Smith are far better historical material.

Unfortunately, Pitcairn never made a written report. He was but a subordinate, probably made a verbal statement to Smith, and Smith wrote a report to Gage. It is to be expected that Smith's and Gage's accounts should agree, and it is to be assumed that the basis of both was Pitcairn's. On the question of the first fire, these two British accounts state, in different terms, that two hundred militia were found assembled on Lexington green, that on the approach of the troops they began to file off the ground, and that they, the militia, began the fire. Gage's report adds that Pitcairn tried to disarm the minutemen. Possibly Gage questioned Pitcairn. What did Pitcairn say?

But first, what kind of man was he? It is so generally

[1] "Journals of Each Provincial Congress", pp. 154 and 661; *cf.* 331.

[2] See the *Salem Gazette* of April 21, 1775, and the *Essex Gazette* of April 25, 1775, See also the "Coffin Broadside", reproduced in Murdock's "Nineteenth of April, 1775." The other contemporary newspaper account was published by the *Massachusetts Spy*, in Worcester, May 3, 1775. Some of these newspaper reports are very much the same in wording.

agreed that he was of high character that even in the absence of contemporary description of him the good reputation must be accepted. Percy and Burgoyne wrote regretfully of his death at Bunker Hill.[1] Even Gordon unwillingly gives indirect evidence on this point, for after his bitter accusation of him, just quoted, he goes on to say, "To what I have wrote respecting Major Pitcairn, I am sensible his general character may be objected." Pitcairn's general character must indeed have been good if he, a mere major of marines, was so generally known to the Americans.

Pitcairn denied that he gave the order to fire.[2] The remaining span of his life was short, for less than two months later he was shot on the rampart of Bunker Hill. He communicated with none in the American camp; he neither wrote a letter nor talked for publication. Probably he knew what was said of him, but if so, he very likely had a bluff disregard for Yankee public opinion. He did not foresee that he would be made the protagonist of British bloodthirstiness, and appear in American schoolbooks for generations as the man who ordered the killing at Lexington.[3] It was a strange combination of

[1] "Letters of Hugh, Earl Percy", p. 57. Fonblanque's "Burgoyne", p. 154. Burgoyne wrote, "Major Pitcairn was a brave and good man", and went on to tell the story of the son carrying his wounded father on his back to the boats.

[2] In 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XVII, 315, is an article by Charles Hudson concerning Pitcairn, in which it is said that Pitcairn admitted giving the order to fire. Mr. Hudson wrote the article in old age, shortly before his death, possibly without notes. And neither in his own "History of Lexington", nor anywhere else that I can find, is there evidence that Pitcairn made this admission. Is this another proof of the unreliability of memory? (See Murdock, "Nineteenth of April, 1775", p. 34, who notes that Hudson made the statement, but "on what authority I do not know.")

[3] A type of mid-nineteenth century popular narrative, strongly anti-British, is to be found in Neff's "Army and Navy in America", 1845. "As Pitcairne approached he vociferated, 'Disperse, rebels; lay down your arms and

circumstances that made it possible for Americans to shelter an enemy's good name.

A little series of letters [1] half reveals the story of one John Brown, a "valuable friend to the cause of America", who was taken at Newport with a cargo of flour which he was conveying in a packet, and carried into Boston. The governor of Rhode Island corresponded with the Massachusetts Provincial Congress concerning his release, to effect which the Congress delivered over to Rhode Island the persons of Samuel Murray, son of the mandamus councillor, captured on the Nineteenth, and two captured British officers who, being unwounded, were able to travel. And John Brown was released.

While in Boston he apparently had some freedom, for he talked with Pitcairn. The story that he told on his return was related by Deputy Governor Sessions to the next link in the chain of circumstances.

This was Ezra Stiles, later president of Yale College, but in 1775 the minister of Newport, Rhode Island. His voluminous "Literary Diary" shows him to have been a man eager for news; he records every rumor. Yet he analyzes each with discrimination. When he gets the news, apparently confirmed, that there were great tumults in London, and that Lord North had fled to France, he writes, "But I think no Credit is to be given to it." He goes minutely into the figures of the reports of the casualties of the Nineteenth, and on August 21, receiving at last Gage's official return, he checks up the figures with the statements that have come to him before. He

disperse.' The people not immediately obeying his orders, he rushed from the ranks, fired a pistol, brandished his sword à la Hudibras, and ordered the soldiers to fire on this little party of men."

[1] 4 Force's "American Archives", II, 430*ff*.

cannot understand why the light infantry are mentioned at Lexington and not the marines, since Pitcairn was there. And having by this time received from Governor Sessions Brown's story concerning Pitcairn, under the fourth head of his analysis Stiles wrote as follows:

There is a certain Sliding over and Indeterminateness in describ^{g} the begin^{g} of the firing. Major Pitcairn who was a good Man in a bad Cause, insisted upon it to the day of his Death, that the Colonists fired first: & that he commanded not to fire & endeavored to stay & stop the firing after it began: But then he told this with such Circumstances as convince me that he was deceived tho' on the spot. *He does not say that he saw the Colonists fire first.* Had he said it, I would have believed him, being a Man of Integrity & Honor. *He expressly says he did not see who fired first;* and yet believed the Peasants began. His acc^{o} is this—that riding up to them he ordered them to disperse; which they not doing instantly, he turned about to order his Troops so to draw out as to surround and disarm them. As he turned he *saw* a Gun in a Peasants hand from behind a Wall, *flash in the pan without going off;* and instantly or very soon 2 or 3 Guns went off by which he *found his horse wounded* & also a man *near him wounded. These Guns he did not see*, but believ^{g} they could not come from his own pple; *doubted not* & so asserted that they came from our pple; & that thus they began the Attack. The Impetuosity of the Kings Troops were such that a promiscuous, uncommanded but general Fire took place, which Pitcairn could not prevent; tho' he struck his staff or Sword downwards with all Earnestness as the signal to forbear or cease firing. This acc^{o} Major Pitcairn himself gave Mr. Brown of Providence who was seized with Flour & carried to B^{o} [Boston] a few days after the Battle; & Gov. Sessions told it to me. I asked if Pitcairn saw the Flash over the stone wall before or after the firing began? it was replied, before.[1]

[1] Stiles' "Literary Diary", 1, 604–605.

Stiles then goes on to quote other testimony, and comparing it with Pitcairn's, comes to his conclusion, which was that "the Soldiery and young Officers wanted to have at the damned Dogs, & in their Impetuosity burst out into Firing & continued it contrary to the Command of Pitcairn." Here certainly, though by an enemy, we have Pitcairn's character defended and his veracity accepted, though with the proviso that he was himself deceived.

Out of the confusion of charges and countercharges, greater to-day than was apparent to Stiles, this seems still the best conclusion. We need not suppose, with Stiles, that the young officers and the soldiers were deliberate in act and clever in concealing their responsibility. There needed only to be, behind Pitcairn's back, the impetuous firing of a pistol and the ready response from a few guns, and the whole affair would be begun. There would follow the immediate volleying, with the soldiers deaf to all control.

XIV

IN the examination of evidence concerning the Lexington shooting, we have studied chiefly American material, with Pitcairn's statement coming through American channels. There is no more direct testimony than these, and there could not be unless some member of the first British company—the only ones who, besides the provincials, Pitcairn, and the mounted officers, could see the affair—had taken to writing. Is there such British material?

The history of the British 52d Regiment[1] says that at Lexington the light company of the 10th Regiment was in advance. The 10th was Smith's regiment, and for that reason or for some other that company might have had the advance. That being so, there is no reason to expect direct testimony from Lieutenant Edward Thoroton Gould of the 4th Regiment, wounded and captured. He could only say, in his statement of the next day:

> On our arrival at that place [Lexington] we saw a body of provincial troops armed, to the number of about sixty or seventy men; on our approach they dispersed, and soon after firing began, but which party fired first I cannot exactly say, as our troops rushed on, shouting, hazzaing, previous to the firing, which was continued by our troops so long as any of the provincials were to be seen.[2]

Gould, therefore, not being in the van, saw nothing, nor did private Bateman of the 52d Regiment, who made deposition; nor did Marr of the 4th, Davies and Cooper

[1] Quoted in "Memoir and Letters of Capt. W. G. Evelyn", p. 56.
[2] Gould's deposition.

of the 23d, nor McDonald of the 38th, all of whom Gordon questioned as to the firing. All of these privates, being captives (or if we may believe Ripley, deserters, except the wounded Bateman), were obliging as to their beliefs, but again these men need not occupy us since they did not see. Yet there was one man, known to us already, who being an officer of the 10th Light Company, might have been in position to see and to hear.

This was De Berniere. Apparently for his own interest he wrote, in addition to his story of his two spying trips into the country, an account of this day, to which he appended a copy of the return of the casualties. But if we expect De Berniere to make statements as to what he saw, which shall clearly and finally settle the question of responsibility, we shall be disappointed. It is not wholly a matter of modesty that in his narrative De Berniere never but once uses the first person singular: it is a feature of that lack of definiteness of observation and of vividness of memory which teachers of composition labor upon with their pupils. The "we" or "they" story of an adventure makes it vague and dull; the "I" gives definiteness and actuality. Further, the statement of what a man heard and saw is testimony, whereas a general statement is not. Read now De Berniere's story of Lexington.

The troops received no interruption in their march until they arrived at Lexington, a town eleven miles from Boston, where there were about 150 rebels drawn out in divisions, with intervals as wide as the front of the divisions; the light infantry who marched in front halted, and Major Pitcairn came up immediately and cried out to the rebels to throw down their arms and disperse, which they did not do; he called out a second time, but to no purpose; upon which he ordered our light-infantry to advance and disarm them, which they were doing,

when one of the rebels fired a shot, our soldiers returned the fire and killed about fourteen of them; there was only one of the 10th light-infantry received a shot through his leg; some of them got into the church and fired from it, but were soon drove out.[1]

The story does not jibe with the others. We have seen that the only halt was at a distance, out of sight of the green, for the purpose of loading. De Berniere would have us believe, in contradiction to the greater mass of testimony, that the regulars remained at that halt until Pitcairn, finding the provincials stubborn, called his men forward to disarm them. "Which they were doing"—coming to do, with the furious rush that daunted Parker? And the rest happened. If De Berniere had given the evidence of his own senses, and that alone! There was no John Brown to ask him if he *saw* that first shot.

But to support Stiles, and exonerate Pitcairn, let us notice that De Berniere says nothing of any order to fire. Barker on this point is positive. As he was in the rear, we cannot expect from him any direct testimony, but though he claims that the Americans fired first, he is a good witness for Pitcairn, supposing Barker to be reporting the talk of the officer's mess.

At 5 oclock we arrived there and saw a number of People, I believe between 2 and 300, formed on a Common in the middle of the Town; we still continued advancing, keeping prepared against attack tho' without intending to at-

[1] 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, IV, 216. It is of course possible that Berniere did not see clearly. The position of an ensign was at the rear of his company, though when it was in two platoons he might be at the flank of one of them. Again, at Concord Berniere was not with his own company, but went with Parsons' detachment to Colonel Barrett's. In Lexington he may already have been assigned to the other duty. This might explain why he had nothing more definite to report.

tack them, but on our coming near them they fired one or two shots, upon which our men without any orders rushed in upon them, fired and put 'em to flight.

We are at the end of our written testimony. The traditional has been discounted, the legendary set aside; we have studied only eyewitnesses' statements, and the writings of those contemporaries who, with the intention to make a thorough examination of the evidence, endeavored to give a clear statement of the case. With such data as has survived out of the past we have tried, as seems right for a local history, to make a decision upon controversial questions.

There is one more piece of evidence, however, of another nature, which recalls us now to the other details of the affray.

XV

THE reader will have noticed that this book accepts, as good testimony, anything written concerning the Nineteenth which is first hand or gathered at first hand, and set down with the intention of being complete and fair. Thus Clarke's Narrative and Gordon's Letter and Warren's Diary have been accepted as throwing a good light upon the events of the day. And thus even Stiles's evidence, though not even gathered at first hand, comes from such an important original source, is passed on by educated men, and is analyzed by Stiles with such keenness that it has always been quoted in any extended study of the day. One more document of the year 1775 remains to be produced which throws upon the fighting a light different from any other. Like Clarke's and Gordon's material, it was gathered on the ground within a few weeks of the shooting by men who came to Lexington for the purpose.

When the governor's guard of the Connecticut militia came in late April to the siege of Boston, there were in it two young men, Ralph Earl and Amos Doolittle. In some interval of their three weeks' stay on duty,[1] they went to Lexington and Concord with the purpose of producing a set of engravings presenting the more important events of the Nineteenth. On that trip Earl, being a budding portrait painter, made sketches of his backgrounds; and Doolittle the engraver, since his friend

[1] See "An Old New Haven Engraver and his Work: Amos Doolittle." By Reverend William Beardsley; pamphlet, thirty-five copies printed. 1910. I have found another statement, unauthenticated, which puts the visit of Earl and Doolittle in July.

was not particularly skilful in drawing the human figure, served as lay figure. "According to a statement of Mr. Doolittle, he acted as a kind of model for Mr. Earl to make his drawings, so that when he wished to represent one of the Provincials as loading his gun, crouching behind a stone wall when firing on the enemy, he would require Mr. D. to put himself in such a position." [1] From the four finished drawings Doolittle made his engravings, which were sold in New Haven in the following December for six shillings the set plain, eight shillings colored. The originals are now among the rarest of American engravings, and though they are quite devoid of artistic merit, they command a high price because of their historic interest.[2]

Our present interest is in their evident intention to reproduce historic truth. As crude as Revere's engraving of the Boston Massacre, they have the same sincerity of purpose. There is nothing romantic in their composition. No artistic license is taken. Plainly, Earl sat himself down before his landscape, and having satisfied himself just what was the course of events, chose a dramatic moment and tried to set his figures in their proper places. Because of that honesty of purpose, and not a little because of the technical crudity which forbade all attempt at the merely beautiful or pathetic, they speak for themselves as clearly as does Gordon's "Letter." For it

[1] Barber's "History of New Haven", edition of 1856, p. 157.

[2] There have been several reproductions of this set of engravings, but none with proper accuracy until 1903 Charles E. Goodspeed of Boston employed Sidney L. Smith to reëngrave the whole. With remarkable fidelity to the original, reproducing line for line, and preserving the original quaintness, Mr. Smith made four excellent plates, the prints from which have now in their turn become rare. All four of these prints are here reproduced, with Mr. Goodspeed's permission, from copies owned by Percy W. Brown of Concord.

AMOS DOOLITTLE'S FIRST PLATE.

"THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON, APRIL 19TH, 1775."

Showing the Americans dispersing, Pitcairn and his Troops, the Tavern and Meeting-house, and the Grenadiers on the road to Concord.

is to be supposed that Earl's drawings were scarcely less crude than Doolittle's work. Both the artists were only twenty-one, and Doolittle could have been taught very little of copperplate engraving by the silversmith under whom he worked. His plates are less the result of native talent than of industry, and their effect is that of raw realism. A proof of the effort at historic correctness in the Lexington plate is in the long shadows falling from the east, to indicate sunrise.

The first of the series is entitled "The Battle of Lexington. April 19th 1775. Plate I." In almost the exact center of the middle distance stands a tree, to the left of which is the tavern with its outbuildings, to the right the church and its separate belfry. Behind it is the road to Concord, and on it, indifferently marching by, is a column of troops, doubtless meant for the grenadiers under Smith. Around the tree are other soldiers, companies of light infantry, coming forward confusedly to the support of their comrades in front. These last are in two platoons, the one standing with levelled guns, the other already enveloped in smoke. To the spectator's right of this latter company is Major Pitcairn, on horseback, at the head, says the legend, of the Regular Grenadiers, though we know that that is wrong. There are no other mounted officers, but behind Pitcairn stand three soldiers in line—or perhaps they are meant for officers, for officers of foot carried the light flintlock called a fusee, and these have guns, which they are levelling apparently at Pitcairn. To fit the extreme conjectures of Stiles' theory, they may be engaged in the delicate task of lightly wounding Pitcairn's horse, in order to convince its master that the provincials had done the deed; but more likely we are here observing one of Doolittle's struggles with perspective.—

London wits, by the way, had some little amusement from that wounded horse—"a Scots officer's Scots poney." [1]

The foreground of the picture is occupied by the Americans. Here the depositions of 1775 are followed to the letter, for none of the Americans are resisting. If they are not lying wounded, they are hastily leaving the field, except for the one man who, with hand uplifted, is facing the foe—Jonas Parker, we may suppose, who swore he would not run. The artist's command of human anatomy, and of drawing, is very slight, for beyond the standing man is a prone figure that must be twice as tall. Yet in the crowd of militiamen at the left of the scene is depicted a fearsome haste.—If the Doolittle print bears any testimony as to the fight, it is that the regulars fired upon a dispersing company.

There is, however, in the array of the British a feature that is worth remarking. Both the platoon that is firing and that which has "presented" and is about to fire, stand in the attitude prescribed by the drillmasters. It is sometimes said that the British commonly fired from their hips. If so, the action is not according to regulations. All the drill books of that period give exact instructions as to firing from the shoulder. Certainly the men are shown so in the Lexington print; and moreover, if we can judge by their odd attitudes, they have inclined their heads, and are aiming.

Further, these two platoons are shown in the proper triple ranks, and "locked." These two facts need explanation.

For many years after the introduction of firearms, students of the art of war tried to make infantry fire more effective. By gradual progress from the time when

[1] Almon's "Remembrancer", III, 87.

spearmen marched on foot in solid masses, through the time when matchlockmen and pikemen were arranged in varying proportions, they advanced at Vauban's instance[1] to the time when the pike and half-pike were discarded altogether, and the ranks were made up entirely of men carrying the flintlock, or as it was then commonly called, the firelock.

In his "Reveries" Marshal Saxe speculated, about 1750, upon new infantry tactics. He wished to discard the formation in eight ranks and to substitute four, and he theorized upon a more deadly method of fire, by having the front men only do the shooting, using one by one the muskets of the three rear files, passed forward from hand to hand. If this was ever tried in Europe, it was not brought into use in America, except in the natural method of posting marksmen on a parapet, to use the guns which their comrades handed up to them. In the open field, the arrangement was not used.

Instead, there had developed in the English army the system of three ranks of men, all delivering their fire together. It is explained in Humphrey Bland's "A Treatise of Military Discipline" of 1753; it is used in the army regulations of 1764; it is used in Timothy Pickering's "Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia" of 1775; and it is to be found in Duane's (American) "Military Dictionary" of 1814, as a survival in spite of Steuben's method of two ranks. It is said that Wolfe at Quebec ranged his men in two lines; but even that striking example had little effect upon military conservatism. Pickering, doubtful as he plainly was of the efficacy of the fire of men in three ranks, nevertheless insisted that it was "practicable, we know, because it has been practised

[1] Lloyd, "History of Infantry", p. 136.

for almost an age." [1] Duane's "Dictionary" speaks of the system as "the natural formation." Although the two-rank system came to be habitually used against Napoleon's troops in the Peninsula, it was not adopted for the British army until 1824.[2] It has now been in use, then, for a hundred years.

Very properly, therefore, Doolittle shows the British troops in three ranks in his Lexington and Concord plates. Next as to their method of volley-firing. This was a subject which much interested Marshal Saxe. Always at that time the front rank knelt (the two front ranks, if there were four in all) and the experience of having their comrades fire over their heads made them nervous, unsteady, and slow in rising up to reload, "for all those who labour under any degree of fear, are naturally desirous to continue as long as possible in such an attitude; and after they have fired, do not rise up, in order to load again, with that briskness which is necessary." [3] Thus Marshal Saxe in a book first published, posthumously, in 1757, and brought out in an English translation at Edinburgh two years later, which was familiar not only to all English students of the art of war, but also to Pickering in America. But though Saxe argued clearly, and wished to arm his two rear ranks, in addition to slung firelocks, with half-pikes fourteen and a half feet long, "whose appearance must be dreadful to your enemies", and would have the two front ranks fire standing, his British students did not accept his reasoning, clung to the three ranks, and made the front rank kneel.[4]

[1] "Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia", p. 126.

[2] E. M. Lloyd, "History of Infantry", p. 187.

[3] "Reveries", p. 46.

[4] The suggestion made at the siege of Boston on account of the shortage of arms and ammunition, that the Americans adopt the pike, may have gone back

Firing by this method was a slow process. Saxe complained that it compelled a halt, and further warned young officers against "the prejudices of parade officers who look upon, as only essential, the manual exercise, the checquered firing, coming down together . . . as front rank make ready! and many other things equally useless." It is a true criticism, and a striking description, the point of it here being that none of these things, retained as they were in the drill book, happened at Lexington. For if they had, some description, some word or two in the narratives or the depositions, would have given a hint of the halt, the series of orders, the front ranks firing from the knee. Elijah Sanderson deposed in 1825 that the British "fired, but did not take sight." He referred to the absence of the practice of which Saxe complained—the front rank kneeling, and all the men aiming, waiting in constrained positions for the word of command. The Doolittle print is quite in accord with this deduction.

And here we have another argument, if one is still needed, exonerating Pitcairn.

If, then, there was no series of orders given to fire, if, instead, there was only Pitcairn trying to restrain his men, what happened when some subaltern fired his pistol? The men must have fired, but how?

It was not a promiscuous fire. Three ranks cannot fire at haphazard without danger to each other, nor can two. Besides, we have testimony that there were volleys. What was the drill of the men to fit them to fire so?

The three ranks were accustomed to "lock." It was the invariable drill-ground manœuver; we have the same nowadays, when the rear-rank men fire through

to this theorizing of Saxe. There is evidence that pikes were used by the rebels, perhaps not in any quantity.

the intervals of the front rank. But it was more complicated with three ranks. Closing up the distance between them, which in marching commonly was four feet, "measuring from the toes of one rank to the toes of the next",[1]—closing up this distance to two feet, the second rank stepped a half-pace to the right of the first, and the third rank stepped another half-pace to the right. Through the intervals they thrust their long guns (the gun captured at Concord bridge measures five feet ten inches in length) and so could fire safely. The men had been drilled to this manœuver all through the Boston winter; even the recruits had mastered it as a habit.

Coming on, "rushing furiously", the front rank must have had regard for its personal safety from the guns behind, the second rank also. Both these ranks would slacken pace till they knew that their comrades were at their very backs, before they dared fire. Then—"uncommanded", concluded Stiles; "without any orders" stated Barker—they could safely discharge their volley. It was not merely not impossible to do so: it must have been done so. It had been done so before, when at Dettingen in 1743 "the whole three ranks of the British infantry made a running fire of their own accord . . . stooping all as low as they could." [2]

This, then, is Earl and Doolittle's contribution to the story, that the firing was done thus, by the impetuous action of the men themselves.

Two volleys seem to have been fired, from the two platoons which the engraving shows. It was these volleys, and not the feeble and scattering return of the provincials,

[1] Pickering's "Easy Plan of Discipline."
[2] Lloyd's "History of Infantry", p. 138.

which Samuel Adams heard two miles away, when he exclaimed, "Oh, what a glorious morning is this!" If his words have since been made poetical, it was not by the report of Hancock, who heard them and thought that they merely referred to the weather.[1]

[1] The testimony as to volleys is to be found in the depositions of Robbins, Fessenden, B. Tidd, Abbott, Mead, and Levi Harrington, all of 1775. It is implied, rather than stated, in the William, John, and Ebenezer Munroe depositions of 1825. After the first two volleys, followed a general fire at individuals escaping. NOTE: The gun captured at Concord bridge now in the collection of the Concord Antiquarian Society, was of course a light-infantry gun, like those used in the shooting at Lexington, and has the extraordinary length, according to modern standards, of five feet ten inches. Its history is as follows, quoted from the Antiquarian Society's Catalogue. "In the official history of the Seventy-fifth celebration of the Fight, page 113, we read, 'The first trophy of the Revolution was taken by a citizen of Lincoln. Col. Abijah Pierce was colonel of the Regiment of Minute Men. He had been but recently chosen to that office, had not provided himself with equipments, and came up to Concord in the morning armed with nothing but a stout cane. He went with the Lincoln company to the North Bridge, and when the Regulars were repulsed armed himself with the gun of one of the British soldiers who was killed by the first fire, and used it during the day in the pursuit to Lexington and West Cambridge. It was preserved nearly fifty years in his family and by his descendants.' On page 134 of the same report, Amos Baker of Lincoln, the last survivor of the men who stood at the North Bridge, says, in a sworn affidavit as to the events of the day, 'I understood that Col. Abijah Pierce got the gun of one of the British soldiers who was killed at the Bridge and armed himself with it. There were two British soldiers killed at the Bridge.'

"In his 'Autobiography' (published 1903), Senator George F. Hoar, after telling the story of how the weapon came into the possession of Colonel Pierce, his great-grandfather, exactly as above, says, 'The gun was preserved for a long time in his (Colonel Pierce's) family, and came to my grandfather after his death. It was the first trophy of the Revolutionary War taken in battle. Such things, however, were not prized in those days as they are now. One of my uncles lent the musket to one of his neighbors for the celebration of the taking of Cornwallis, and it was never brought back. We would give its weight in gold to get it back.'

"The musket was fairly purchased, at a very low price, by Mr. C. E. Davis, in the year 1852, from a Mr. Johnson, the man to whom Mr. Pierce is said to have lent it; who told precisely the same story as to its history, excepting that he declared that the gun was given, not lent, to him, and was his rightful prop-

erty. The Senator's brother, the late Hon. E. R. Hoar, of Concord, knew, certainly as early as 1887, that the gun was among the articles transferred to this Society by Mr. Davis, and several times expressed to the present writer his satisfaction that it had found an appropriate place in the Society's keeping."

The above was written by George Tolman, long the secretary of the Concord Antiquarian Society, a careful and accurate historian. The reader's attention is called to the fact that the gun was the first trophy *taken in fight*. The first actual trophies were captured earlier in Lexington, from British stragglers.

It may be interesting to add that a celebration of the taking of Cornwallis, commonly called a "Cornwallis", was a mid-nineteenth century diversion with noise and absurdity somewhat analogous to the later and now happily almost defunct "Antiques and Horribles" of the Fourth of July, in New England.

Cummings E. Davis was an odd character whose hobby was in advance of his times. His collection of local antiques, gathered either by gift or by purchase at low prices, is the foundation of the Concord Antiquarian Society's collection. There are other Concord and Lincoln families besides the Hoars, who would give high prices now for the objects given or sold cheaply to Mr. Davis years ago.

XVI

OUR long discussion, called for because of a hundred years of controversy, has devoted itself largely to the actions of the British. Of the American, the tale is brief. The heroic stand of the wounded Jonas Parker, bayoneted as he was struggling to reload;[1] the scattering fire of his friends, ineffective because of the British smoke or else because of distance; the clearing of the green of all save the huddled forms of the dead—that is the story. The regulars fired as long as any armed men were in sight.

It was not this later fire, but the volleys at close range, that did the greater execution. Jonathan Harrington, mortally wounded on the common, dragged himself to his house a few rods away and expired on the doorsteps, at his wife's feet. Caleb Harrington, endeavoring to escape from the meetinghouse, where he had gone for powder, found himself close to his enemies, and was killed. Asahel Porter, of Woburn, had been captured by the British and was in their midst when the firing began. Trying to escape in the confusion, he was shot down. Eight men in all were killed, and ten wounded, in this skirmish of a few minutes.[2]

On the part of the British, one man of the leading light

[1] He had placed his balls and his flints in his hat, between his feet, declaring that he would not run. John and Ebenezer Munroe fired, like Jonas Parker, from their places in the line. Others fired when retreating, one from the Buckman tavern.

[2] The statements in these two paragraphs are based on the depositions of 1825, and on local tradition as found in Hudson's and Phinney's histories.

company, the 10th Infantry, was slightly wounded. He was able to proceed with the detachment.[1]

Gage's account states, with Smith's and De Berniere's, that there was firing from the meetinghouse. Gage particularly states that Smith and Pitcairn "with the Greatest Difficulty kept the Soldiers from forcing into the Meeting House and putting all those in it to death." Of this statement, Gordon is scornful. "Would you not suppose there was a great number in the meeting-house, while the Regulars were upon the common on the right of it, between that and the Lexington company? Without doubt. And who do you imagine they were? One Joshua Simonds, who happened to be getting powder there as the troops arrived; besides whom, I believe there were not two, if so much as one; for by reason of the position of the meeting-house, none would have remained in it through choice but fools and madmen." [2]

To refer to the Doolittle print, it says plainly that Smith's grenadiers were placidly marching by at the time of the shooting. The idea is difficult to accept, and may

[1] Smith tells of the wounding of the man, and also Gage. The wound was in the leg; Berniere says through it. Another account says that a second man was wounded in the hand. Both wounds were apparently slight.

[2] We can imagine what would have happened to the men and to the church, had Prussians found them there. Gordon, in his "History", several years later than his "Letter", modified his statement. "Lest it should be said and believed, that the meeting was crowded with militia, before and during the fire, let me mention that there were only a man and a boy in it." The depositions of 1825 state that the men in the meeting house had gone there for the purpose of removing powder (John Munroe's statement) and that Joshua Simonds, finding himself caught there—a witness, perhaps, of the death of Caleb Harrington—had prepared to fire his gun into an open cask of powder, intending to "touch it off", if the British entered. (Ebenezer Munroe's statement.)

Gordon's "Letter" pertinently adds: "Howevér, if Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn's humanity prevented the soldiers putting all those persons to death, their military skill should certainly have made some of them prisoners."

be considered the artist's endeavor to convey the idea that they were close at hand. For though the Richard Pope MS. states that when Pitcairn halted to load the grenadiers joined him (and the thing is in itself possible enough) when the flank companies, as the light infantry often were called, again took up their march, the grenadiers were necessarily in the rear, and the debouching of the advance on to the green was so quick, and the firing so immediate, that the grenadiers must have been still behind. According to Gage's story, Smith came up in time to help protect any men that might be in the meetinghouse; but there is double evidence (though in each case negative) that the grenadiers were not there at the time of the first firing. The first is Gordon's implication to that effect when he speaks of the troops being on the right of the meetinghouse. The second is the story of the escape of Joseph Comee, who, running from the building with the luckless Caleb Harrington, escaped his fate by dodging across the Concord road and running through the Marrett Munroe house. Had the grenadiers occupied the road, he could scarcely have passed through them except as the hero of an adventure which surely would have been related unto these latter days.

Smith came on the ground, then, late. It might be inquired why he was not with the advance, on the supposition that he had met Pitcairn at the halt, and had been told that the militia were waiting a few rods ahead. But it is fairer to assume (as his report to Gage implies) that he had not been given that piece of news. It is kinder to think of Smith not as neglecting his duty, but merely as always slow—slow in starting, slow now, slow in going to the help of his men in Concord, terribly slow

in commencing his retreat. Smith has enough to answer for.

One other witness, though a futile one, may be introduced at this point. This is Reuben Brown, minuteman of Concord, sent to Lexington to find what truth there was in Prescott's news that the British were coming. He returned to report that there had been firing, for he had seen it. But when asked if bullets had been used, he could only say that he did not know.

This seems absurd enough, until one considers what probably happened. Brown arrived, on horseback, at the corner where the Concord road opens out to give a sight of the green. And there he saw the militia and the troops, heard first the huzzaing and then the volley, saw the running fugitives. The dead lay enshrouded in the smoke, their comrades were escaping—and at a little distance, marching up the road directly towards him, was the head of the column of grenadiers. It was no place for a man who had no urgent business there; and turning his horse, Brown galloped for home. Most men would have done the same.

This is but a dry account, with its attempt to be judicial and correct, of an affair which contained so much emotion and tragedy. The earnest patriotism of the men of Lexington, their high feeling of the sacredness of their ground, the harsh and violent disillusionment, the blood and death, the wounds and flight—all these were a part of the story here so coldly analyzed. The anguish of those who loved the slain is hidden, and cannot be described. Further, that breaking from restraint, that shooting and bayoneting, were more than a mere Boston riot. Here was the beginning of the cutting of the an-

cient tie. When the British should arrive in Concord, carrying the memory of that bloodshed, there would be no more effort to prevent fighting. For them, though not yet for the men of Concord, war had begun.

Pitcairn saw what had been done. Whether or not he had sworn at the rebels, he must have been swearing now. He and Smith and the company officers had hard work in getting the men back into line. When at last they were in their ranks again, they were allowed to give that huzza of victory which so roused the indignation of the Reverend Jonas Clarke, who arrived on the green in time to hear it. "In the greatness of their might," wrote Gordon, likewise indignant, the regulars marched forward to Concord. They had scarcely left the ground before the Lexington men began to return to it, to succor their wounded comrades, and to capture the stragglers from Smith's column, the first prisoners of the day.

XVII

OF the British march to Concord there is little to be said. Smith reported to Gage that "we saw some, in the woods", presumably meaning countrymen. Gage says only that the whole detachment, grenadiers and light infantry together, proceeded in one body to Concord. The Richard Pope MS., which exaggerates whenever it is not relating its writer's own observations, says that the rebels appeared at a distance, on all sides, gathering to Concord, but made no attack. The fact must be that these five miles of country, where houses were scattered at best, must have been almost stripped of men, and very likely of women and children. Alarmed by Revere or Prescott, or by signal guns, every male on the roll of the minutemen or militia, or on the alarm list, had long since repaired to the place of rendezvous at Lexington, Lincoln, or Concord.

It is impossible to believe one traditional tale, reported by Shattuck and commonly accepted, that Prescott, in escaping from Revere's captors, made his way to Concord by way of Lincoln.[1] If pursued at all, he was not followed far in that lowland full of thickets. There was no need for him to go to the center of Lincoln, and every reason why he should not take an extra ride of at least seven miles. The basis of the story must lie in the fact that the highroad itself passes through a fringe of Lincoln. But there is a simpler explanation of the story. Still standing on the road, at about the place where Prescott must have reached it again, are three houses,

[1] It is very difficult to accept the tradition that as Prescott escaped, the British cut his bridle.

the first of which was occupied by William Smith, captain of the Lincoln minutemen, and another by his first sergeant.[1] A word to one of these men, and Prescott's duty toward rousing Lincoln was done.

The Lincoln men, it will be later seen, arrived in Concord with the rumor in their mouths that the British had reached Lexington and killed six men. It might be supposed that some echo of the real story had waked them, but it can have reached them only after they had mustered. The affair in Lexington, from the arrival to the departure of the troops, cannot have taken more than half an hour, after which Smith marched direct to Concord. Only telephones and automobiles could then have roused the Lincoln men, gathered their company, and got it to Concord first. In all the towns that sent their companies out complete that day, the time of mustering seems surprisingly long until one considers the necessarily slow passage of the news, and the distances to be traversed on foot. It was Prescott's news that got the men of Lincoln from their beds.

Concord, it will be remembered, had received forewarnings that something might happen. The resolves of the Committee of Safety, we have seen, were mild enough; they must have been accompanied by verbal news that put some life into their meaning. At any rate, we are told that from about noon of the preceding day the men of Concord had been busy in carting their stores to safety.[2]

[1] Unpublished lecture of W. E. McGlenen. The three houses here mentioned are on an old section of the highway, not on the modern road.

[2] See Shattuck's "History of Concord", p. 104; George Tolman's "Events of April Nineteenth", p. 22; Frederic Hudson's, "Concord Fight", in *Harper's Magazine* for May, 1875. Grindall Reynolds' "Concord Fight" ("Historical and Other Papers"; also in the *Unitarian Review*, April, 1875, and Drake's "Middle-

Prescott reached Concord, and the alarm was given, some time after one. "This morn^{g}," wrote the Reverend William Emerson, "we w^{r}. alarm'd by y^{e} ring of y^{e} Bell." And then, in order to be as accurate as possible, he inserted the words, "betw 1 & 2 o'Clock." [1] The story goes [2] that the guard at the courthouse, placed there in order to give the alarm, was one Amos Melven, whose admiration was so excited by the fact that the first on the ground was the minister, gun in hand, that he later named his sons William and Emerson. At any rate, we are sure that the pastor, the builder of the Old Manse and the grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson, was like most of the ministers in New England at that day, an ardent Whig. He had acted as chaplain of the Provincial Congress during its recent sessions at Concord, and at the battalion muster on the thirteenth of March had preached a sermon from the stirring text, "Behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you." [3] Emerson is one of those ministers who supply us with so much of our first-hand knowledge of the events of the day. Later he gave his life to the cause, for he went as chaplain to the army at Ticonderoga, and died of the camp fever.

If this warlike minister was first at the rendezvous, others were not long in following him. Amos Barrett, writing fifty years after, set the hour of the alarm at

sex", I, 385*ff*.) do not contain this statement; nor does John S. Keyes' article on the Fight in Hurd's "Middlesex", II, 584*ff*. But all these sources are mines of stories and anecdotes, for the dependability of some of which, see below.

[1] Emerson's diary is reproduced in facsimile in the "Proceedings at the Centennial Celebration of Concord Fight", Concord, 1876, facing p. 164.

[2] Hudson, "Concord Fight", 785–786. The story is traditional.

[3] The original is in the possession of the Emerson descendants. I quote from a MS. copy supplied by Doctor Edward W. Emerson.

three o'clock, in which he seems to be mistaken, but not, however, in saying, "As I was then a minnit man I was soon in town and found my Capt and the Rest of my Compny at the post. It wont long before thair was other minit Compneys." Accounts agree that there was a hurried assembling of minutemen at the appointed post, which was Wright's Tavern, still standing at the eastern end of the square. Shattuck states that there was much uncertainty as to the truth of the news, and others imply the same, for even though Prescott and other messengers had been dispatched to take the alarm further, Reuben Brown was sent to Lexington for information, and another man was sent to Watertown for the same purpose, lest the British should come by that route. As at Lexington, in the chilly wait the minutemen at Concord were for a while dismissed, but not to go to their homes. There was too much to be done. The work of hiding the stores was resumed, if indeed in some quarters it had ceased at all during the night.[1] Until the drum beat again, those who had come to the square could have found plenty to do in concealing the stores. Inadequate as these were for furnishing an army, there was in town far too much to be moved or even hidden before the British arrived.[2]

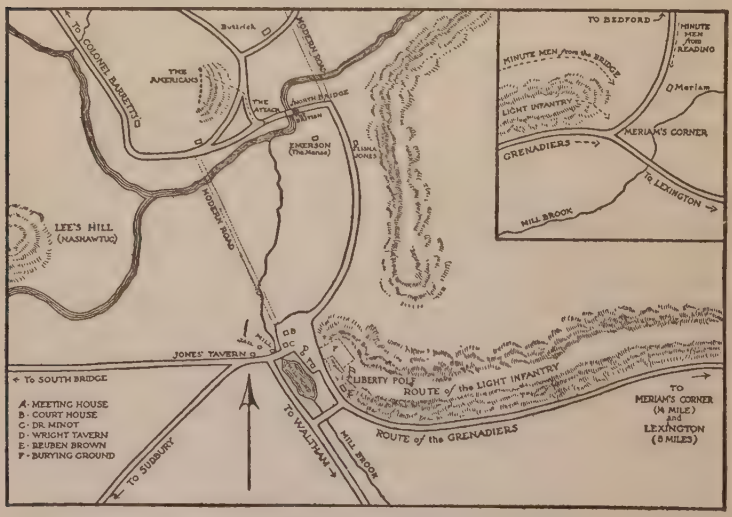
At length came positive news of the British. Reuben

[1] Emerson's anniversary oration of 1776 says, "roused from the very depths of sleep." Thaddeus Blood wrote, "I was called out of bed."

[2] For various statements in this and other paragraphs, consult Shattuck's "History of Concord", chapter vii. Later writers base many of their statements upon this book. It does not appear, however, that Emerson's diary was known to him; I believe it came to light a few weeks or months after the publication of Shattuck's book. Barker's diary was not published for another forty-two years, Amos Barrett's letter not for sixty-five. Shattuck had access to the depositions, and to Berniere, and depended much on local traditions only sixty years old.

Brown returned; he had seen the firing. Shattuck's story of his report is delicious. "On his arrival Major Buttrick inquired if they [the British] fired bullets. 'I do not know, but think it probable,' was the answer." We of to-day may be less formal than our ancestors; but even they, iron men though they were, must have felt some excitement as they put their ranks in order and debated what to do.

The reader needs to understand the topography of the town. The population was much smaller than to-day.



Concord, April 19th, 1775.

Showing the roads as they were at the time of the Fight, and the more important buildings. Inset: Meriam's Corner.

De Berniere wrote, "the town is large and covers a great tract of ground, but the houses are not close together but generally in little groups." In the toy village shown in Doolittle's "View of the Town of Concord", filled with

AMOS DOOLITTLE'S SECOND PLATE.

"A View of the Town of Concord."

Showing Pitcairn and Smith on the hill, their troops below, and beyond the Meeting-house and the Tavern, a detachment destroying stores.

regulars too tall to enter any of the doorways, there stand less than thirty buildings where to-day there are several times that number. But only the local student would be interested to identify more than three of Doolittle's buildings. On the extreme left of the plate stands the barnlike church; in the center is the Wright Tavern; and on the right stands the now vanished courthouse, which was also the town hall, the scene of one event of the day. From the belfry of this building had rung out the alarm.

From the square that lies between the town house and the tavern there ran three roads. The one in the center of Doolittle's picture, running directly away into the distance, does not concern us. It goes to the South Bridge, and on it nothing happened.

But the second road, which runs across the middle of the picture, beneath a cemetery on a ridge, is the road from Lexington. Anyone approaching from that town will see, a mile from the square at Meriam's Corner, how the ridge rises abruptly from the plain, and so dominates the road into town that it was sure to be regarded with suspicion by even so dull a man as Smith. Road and ridge together came to the square, and where the ridge stopped, opposite the town house, the road originally did also.

But behind the ridge and at right angles with it, another ridge began at a few rods' distance and ran northerly to the river. When settlements rose across the river, and access to the town was needed, a third road[1] was

[1] The modern names of these roads are as follows. The first, running to the South Bridge, is modern Main Street. The second is Lexington Road. The third is Monument Street. Bedford Street and Lowell road, which to-day also lead out of the square, were not in existence in 1775.

begun at the corner and ran parallel to the second ridge, seeking a spot to cross the river, which in most places was guarded by wide wet meadows. About a half-mile from the town, where the driest part of the further meadows approached the highest part of the nearer bank, the road turned again at right angles, leaving the base of the ridge, and ran to this crossing, where was erected the North Bridge. Its further abutment was made high and dry, but the road at once sloped down to the meadow, and even though in time a slight causeway was raised, was frequently flooded at high water. At such times vehicles could reach the bridge by means of the roadway, but for a number of rods pedestrians had to make their way along the top of a low stone wall on the northerly side of the way, where a handrail gave a little guidance.

The modern visitor has to use imagination to see the picture. There can have been no such spacious approach to the bridge as there is to-day. There was only a road a little wider than the bridge, a wooden structure looking much like its modern cement imitation; and beyond the bridge, where now stands the bronze Minuteman surrounded by shrubbery, was a gentle slope down to the vanished causeway. Of trees and bushes there were very few.

The wall by the causeway is gone long since, and the causeway itself has been ploughed almost level with the meadow. Eighteen years after the fight the old highway was abandoned in favor of other causeways built upstream and down. For a long time the short stretch of the road that led to the bridge was a part of the property of Ezra Ripley, the minister who succeeded Emerson at the Manse;[1] but in 1834, when the first monument was

[1] Ezra Ripley was called to the Concord Parish after William Emerson's death, and marrying his widow, lived a long lifetime in the Manse. The story

planned, he donated the land to the town. The two old abutments stood empty for another forty years, until in 1875 the bridge was built again, but only to give access to the spot where the first Americans fell, on which the Minuteman statue was erected.

After leaving the bridge the old causeway followed the river upstream, over low ground. At perhaps two hundred yards distance from the bridge, a branch ran straight uphill, to the right. The lower road, after skirting the river for another space, reached higher and drier footing, on which at a greater distance it still followed the curve of the river, until it came to the buildings of the farm of Colonel Barrett, the commander of the militia of Concord, and the man responsible for the safety of the military stores. These farm buildings were one of the main objectives of the British, for it was known that a quantity of warlike material was hidden at this comparatively remote spot.

is told of his innocent vanity at owning the historic piece of ground—how he would, in the presence of a visitor, issue orders to have the cow turned into the battlefield, which would introduce the story of the fight. On this Doctor Ripley considered himself an authority, and in 1827 published a pamphlet on the subject which is interesting and valuable, though too strongly tinged by the controversies of the times.

XVIII

SUCH at that time being the sprawling topography of Concord, with too much ground to cover and too many stores to defend, the news that the British were coming would have presented a serious difficulty to the minutemen who received it had there been any equality of forces. The problem was much simplified by the fact that the regulars were in greatly superior force—that at least Reuben Brown must have been able to establish. It is true that reinforcements were expected from the westerly towns, yet it was very doubtful if these could arrive in time. Barrett being absent on the paramount mission of securing the stores, it was probably his major, John Buttrick, who ordered a reconnaissance down Lexington road.

There were then at the square less than two hundred men. Amos Barrett says "150 of us and more"; Shattuck says there were about a hundred, even including the men from Lincoln. These arrived in a body, under their two captains, Abijah Pierce and William Smith, bringing the rumor that men had been killed at Lexington. The Lincoln men, then, with the two Concord minute companies (some members being probably absent saving the stores) marched down the Lexington road. "We thought," wrote Amos Barrett quaintly, "we wood go and meet the Britsch." So this little array of militia and minutemen stepped out to see what truth there was in Reuben Brown's report.[1]

[1] For this reconnaissance see Emerson's diary, Ripley, Shattuck, Amos Barrett's "Letter", Thaddeus Blood's statement, and on the British side, Barker's diary. The depositions of both the Concord and Lincoln men make no

Barrett's story of the little demonstration is too good to lose. The old man wrote his account, it must be considered, fifty years later, when he had long lived in Maine. The echo of the controversy in Massachusetts had not reached him. He was not intent upon proving anything. He merely remembered the anniversary, and mused upon it, and wrote. "This 19th of April 1825 Brings fresh to my mind the Battle at Concord & Lexinton when I come to Look Back I find it is 50 year Since though so Long I can Remember the hull of it I think Better that I can Remember things 5 years ago—as I was in the hull of it from Concord to Bunkker Hill I take my peen to write sumthing about it as I think I no as mutch about it as any person now Living as I Dont think their is but a few that was their that is now a Live." This is fairly good witness material, allowing for the natural infirmity of an old man's memory, for he had not been subject to a whole community's will-to-believe. Peacefully contemplative, he wrote what he recalled. How simple but how stirring is the picture![1]

"We marched Down to wards L[exington] about a mild or a mild half and we see them acomming we halted

mention of it, but they were intent chiefly on the shooting. As to the men present, Emerson says the Acton men were there, but is of course in error. Thaddeus Blood says, "About four o'clock the several companies of Concord were joined by two companies from Lincoln, the militia company commanded by Captain Pierce, afterwards Colonel, and the minute company by Captain William Smith. We were then formed . . . and marched." *Boston Advertiser*, April 20, 1886.

[1] This may be compared with Thaddeus Blood's description. "We . . . marched in order to the end of Meriam's Hill, then so called, and saw the British troops acoming down Brook's Hill. The sun was rising and shined on their arms, and they made a noble appearance in their red coats and glistening arms. We retreated in order over the top of the hill to the liberty pole, erected on the heights opposite the meeting-house." From this it appears that the minutemen did not march beyond Meriam's Corner.

and stay[d] till they got within about 100 Rods then we was orded to the about face and march[d] before them with our Droms and fifes agoing and also the B [ritish] we had grand musick." Grand music and defiant too, be sure. But here was military wisdom in not engaging with so powerful an adversary.

The minutemen brought their message back to the militia in the town. These consisted of the alarm company, containing the older men and also the minister, who in his diary told of their waiting. "Capt. Minot who Command. y[m]. tho't it proper to take Possess of y[e] Hill above y[e] Meeting house as y[e] most advan[tageous] Situa[tion.]" In his oration a year later the minister described the scene. He used, of course, the language appropriate to all such occasions in those days, as did Joseph Warren. "Nay more,—to see our aged Sires that morning, whose bended Shoulders had long been freed from martial Labors (or military exercise) take Fire again, throwing off the Weight of more than three score Years, with quickened Step ascending yonder Steep, moved by the Transport Danger gave them, conquered enfeebled Nature, while a short Youth boiled up within their Veins, and strung their Nerves anew!" [1] One thinks of old Laertes, arming for his last fight.

This company of old men was stationed on the ridge opposite the church, probably at its highest point, when the minutemen returned with the report (says Emerson), that the regulars "were just upon us, & that we must retreat, as their N°. was more than threbble to ours."

Apparently at once the whole body of provincials retreated to another post. "We then retreat'd fr. y[e] Hill near Liberty Pole & took a new Post back of y[e]

[1] MS. copy of Emerson's unpublished oration.

Town, upon a rising Eminence." This, say the depositions, was a hill "about eighty rods back." [1] Shattuck considers this to have been the northerly declivity of the burying-ground hill, above the present courthouse, whence the ridge has since been cut away. But this being a "falling eminence" meets neither the minister's description nor the defensive needs of the situation. It is most likely that the militia marched directly down the northern side of the hill and across the little hollow through which Court Lane now runs to join Bedford Street. Then climbing the second ridge, which runs north, they took up a position which commanded both the ridge which they had left, and the road which, below them, led to the North Bridge.[2]

[1] The exact position of the alarm company while waiting is not easy to determine. Emerson says it was above, of course meaning opposite, the meeting-house, which stood (on the site of the present building, though facing differently) across the road at the bottom of the ridge. Somewhere near this point was the liberty pole, for Emerson says in his next sentence that they retreated from "y^{e} Hill near Liberty Pole." Shattuck says (p. 104) that the pole stood on the ridge "in the rear of Reuben Brown's." This was the present Antiquarian Society's house, a hundred yards east of the meetinghouse. The ridge behind it has since then been so much cut away that it is impossible to determine the original highest point, where probably the alarm company stood. It is of no real consequence, of course, as long as we remember that this frequently named "first position of the Americans" was on this ridge.—The depositions of the Concord and Lincoln men, practically identical, are in Shattuck's "History of the Town of Concord", pp. 347–349, or in the "Journals of the Provincial Congress", 671–673.

[2] In these statements I am disagreeing with both Ripley and Shattuck, and with Frederic Hudson, who follows them in some particulars. The justification is that Shattuck had evidently not seen the Emerson diary, in which most of my statements are very clearly made. The "second position of the Americans" is therefore not at the corner of Monument Street, an absolutely indefensible position, where the Americans could be both attacked from above and outflanked, but on the ridge further along Monument Street, "back of the town" as Emerson says, at a point undetermined, where their position could not be commanded by the post they had just left, and from which they could secure their own retreat. Note that the depositions say "about eighty rods *back*."

In this temporary security the Americans formed their ranks. Emerson says, "We formed into two Battalions, & waited y^e^ Arrival of y^e^ Enemy." To arrange this formation Buttrick asked Joseph Hosmer to act as adjutant. Hosmer was a farmer and cabinet maker, a quiet man of strong influence in the town, though as yet only a lieutenant. As the other officers of his company were absent, he had sole charge of it. He pointed out to Buttrick that if he left his company to serve as adjutant, the company would have no commander. "It must be so, then," said Buttrick, "you must go." Hosmer accordingly acted as adjutant until after the fight at the bridge.[1]

In the meantime the British had entered the town. Barker, marching with the light infantry at the head

[1] Hosmer, who later influenced the course of the day's events, is worth individualizing. "He made his maiden speech in the old church a few weeks before the memorable Nineteenth of April. A convention met at Concord, and Mr. [Daniel] Bliss made a very eloquent speech, ridiculing the proceedings of the Sons of Liberty, redolent of wit and pungent sarcasm. It is said to have been so impressive, that there was perfect silence for a long time after he ceased to speak. From the opposite corner a man rose, plainly dressed in a suit of 'butternut brown.' He commenced slowly and hesitantly, but in a few moments his timidity vanished, and, in the language of Shattuck's 'History', 'he replied to Mr. Bliss in a strain of natural, unaffected eloquence, for which he was ever afterward distinguished, which at once attracted public attention and introduced him to public favor.' A Worcester lawyer, standing near Mr. Bliss, saw that he frowned, bit his lip, pounded with his boot-heel, and, in a word, showed marked discomposure. 'Who is this man?' 'Hosmer, a mechanic', was the answer. 'Then how comes he to speak such pure English?' 'Because he has an old mother who sits in the chimney corner and reads English poetry all the day long; and I suppose it is "like mother like son." He is the most dangerous man in Concord. His influence over the young men is wonderful, and where he leads they will be sure to follow.'" ("Social Circle Memoirs", I, 116.) Scarcely the most dangerous man in Concord, for his natural modesty would not allow him to put himself forward, and there were other men in town of stronger influence than he, Joseph Hosmer long served his townspeople in public office, and enjoyed their respect and affection until his death in old age.

of the column, saw the minutemen as they retreated before the regulars. "We met with no interruption 'till within a mile or two of the Town, where the Country People had occupied a hill which commanded the road." Very likely he had seen the minutemen on the slope where the ridge dies away at Meriam's Corner. Pitcairn or Smith had seen them also, and knew that the ridge was too dangerous to be left in hostile hands. Therefore, as Barker writes, "the light Infantry were ordered away to the right and ascended the height in one line, upon which the Yankies quitted it without firing, which they did likewise for one or two more successively." Along the ridge, therefore, marched the light infantry in their true function as flankers,[1] while the grenadiers, De Berniere says, "took the lower road." They marched into the town, and took possession of the square where so lately the Americans had been.

This was, says De Berniere, between nine and ten o'clock in the morning. But if so, the march from Lexington had been strangely slow, and the period before the British departure from Concord, which he and other evidence sets at noon, would not leave time for the many events of the morning. It was probably well before eight that the British arrived.

It seems to be the arrival in the square which Doolittle pictured in his "Plate II. A View of the Town of Con-

[1] In his unfinished "Septimius Felton", Hawthorne used the advance and retreat of the British light infantry along this ridge, to set two scenes of his novel. Hawthorne himself lived at the foot of the ridge, and was accustomed to walk and muse on the top if it. He put his hero in the same house and invested him with the same habit. On the ridge-path Septimius meets the commander of the flankers as they enter the town (Hawthorne imagining them to be but a small party) and likewise there he meets the same man on his retreat. The officer challenges him to a duel, forces it on him, and is killed.

cord." There can have been no other time when the neat little review was conducted. Thirteen companies stand in order in the road and square, while among the gravestones on the hill above them stand two officers. According to the legend below, the more chuckle-headed officer is Smith, which would seem to be entirely proper. Pitcairn is surveying the landscape through a glass, doubtless discovering "vast numbers assembling in many parts." [1] From that same hill to-day little can be seen, so many and tall are the shade trees in the town; but to judge from the open landscapes in both of Doolittle's Concord prints, it was then far otherwise. The shadows in the picture still fall from the east, but they are of only moderate length. In the background various officers are strolling about, inspecting the Lilliputian town; and across the millpond a detachment is busy, "destroying the Provincials Stores."

There can have been only the briefest pause for this parade. As we have seen, Smith had made his plan before he reached Lexington, and now for a second time he sent out his light infantry to secure the Concord bridges. Captain Munday Pole with but one company took and held the South Bridge. But apparently knowing that the real task lay in the other direction, Smith sent six companies to the North Bridge. "And I," wrote De Berniere, "was ordered to shew him the road there, and also to conduct him to a house where there was some cannon and other stores hid." This was of course the house of Colonel Barrett.[2]

[1] Smith's report to Gage.

[2] It would be interesting to know how Berniere knew the way. According to his narrative, his only trip to Concord was on the twentieth of March, and he must have arrived late in the day. His description of the town, quoted above, is roughly correct, but of his departure he says, "We set out and crossed the

These six companies, proceeding down Monument Street (the modern name) were at once perceived by the militia waiting on the ridge. "Scarcely had we form'd," wrote William Emerson, "before we saw y^e^. brittish Troops, at the Distance of a ¼ of a Mile, glittering in Arms, advancing towards [us] with y^e^ greatest celerity." It would have been a gay sight, that line of troops at quickstep, in scarlet and white uniforms, but for the threat to the watching provincials. There must have been a hurried consultation. Emerson says merely, "Some were for making a Stand, notw [ithstanding] y^e^ Super [iority] of y^r^ N°. but others more prudent tho't best to retreat till our Strenth sh'd be equal to y^e^ Enemy's by Recruits from neigh^g^ Towns y^t^ were contin [ually] coming into our Assistance." But tradition tells that it was the gallant minister himself who was for making a stand. "Let us stand our ground; if we die, let us die here." It is handed down in his family that he had a firm belief that the Lord would fight for the just cause. But he was overruled. Eleazer Brooks of Lincoln is re-

bridge in the town, and of consequence left the town on the other side of the river to what we entered it." Now coming from Weston, as Berniere did, and leaving by the Lexington road, as he says he did, one does not cross or even see the river. What Berniere did see and cross, mistaking it for the river, was the mill pond, a long and narrow arm of which extended in early spring under the bridge in Heywood Street and into the easterly meadow. (See the description of this long-vanished topographical feature in the MS. book of Doctor Edward Jarvis in the Concord Free Public Library.) This shows that Berniere both arrived and departed in the dark. His knowledge of the way to Colonel Barrett's must have been given him by others. (Shattuck, it will be remembered, says that the detachment had Tory guides.) Berniere may, of course, have made other trips to Concord, but it seems as if his fairly thorough MS. would have mentioned them. It would be interesting to know if he and Captain Browne made for Gage the military map, diagrammatic rather than exact, showing the roads as far as Concord, now in the Congressional Library at Washington. It has no Concord byroads.

ported as saying, to a suggestion that the militia go and meet the British, "No, it will not do for us to begin the war." [1] If Shattuck is right, it was now that Colonel Barrett, having left his work of caring for the safety of the stores, rode up and assumed command. Both Ripley and Shattuck credit Barrett with a speech at this emergency, almost the exact duplicate, lacking the historical allusions, of the speech which had roused De Berniere's mirth at Framingham. Though by this time the militia may have been equal in number to the light infantry on the road below, the grenadiers were close at hand. Barrett ordered the provincials to retreat across the North Bridge. The Americans can scarcely have been out of musket shot before the regulars took possession of it.[2]

The light infantry then divided themselves into two parties. Three companies, under Captain Laurie of the 43d, remained on guard at the bridge. The other three companies, under the command of Captain Parsons of

[1] Shattuck's "History of the Town of Concord."

[2] The Concord and Lincoln depositions agree as to the close proximity of the British at this first passage of the bridge, saying in the same words, "We then immediately went before them and passed the bridge, just before a party of them, to the number of about two hundred, arrived." The depositions throw a little light on the size of the company of those days. There were six companies, and if there were but two hundred men in all, there were scarcely thirty-five men to a company, which agrees with computations made from other data.

In this particular the Acton depositions of 1835, by Thomas Thorp and Solomon Smith (see appendix to Josiah Adams' Acton Centennial Address) are quite in error. They agree that there was but one company stationed at the bridge, and that it numbered about eighty. This is contrary to the British statements that there were six companies, and to the fact that officers of various companies were wounded at the bridge. And Thorp's statement that he saw three or four hundred men on Lee's Hill (Nashawtuc) is quite incredible. There was no reason to send more than a small patrol there, as a lookout. John S. Keyes and George Tolman state that five companies marched to the bridge; but it seems safer to follow Gage, Berniere, and Barker, who agree on six.

the 10th, marched on to Colonel Barrett's, following in the very tracks of the old warrior, who in anticipation of their coming was galloping to give the last orders at his house. Barrett was sixty-five, and had accepted his colonelcy under protest that he was too old. He had been told that all that was wanted of him was his advice, but to-day he was giving hard service. Unable to march, he was long hours in the saddle, and the order which he finally issued is among the most momentous in American history. He reached his farm, gave warning and advice, and left the place before the regulars could arrive. The Concord soldiers of that day had more to think of than just the simple matter of fighting, for they had on their minds the safety of their families.

Such was the case with William Emerson. While the provincials crossed the bridge, the minister remained behind. His house—the Old Manse—stood in the field around which the road turned to reach the bridge. It stood not far from the river; the bridge was within a hundred yards. To protect his wife and children, the minister went home, accompanied, we are told by tradition, by a little crowd of his parishioners, whose fears he tried to soothe. While he remained among them, his wife vainly urging him to come inside the house, the light infantry rummaged at Barrett's farm, the grenadiers searched in the village, and across the river the numbers of the militia were steadily growing, while the Fabian leaders waited for the passage of a little more time.[1]

[1] I have closely followed Emerson's and Amos Barrett's original texts, thinking it a pity to spoil the picturesqueness of the spelling. Where abbreviations seemed obscure, I have expanded them. The reader will remember that in such a word as "y^{e}" the "y" stands for "th", an ancient form used by the minister. "Y^{t}" therefore means "*that*", "y^{r}", "*their.*"

The Emerson family stories, such as do not appear in Shattuck's "History",

I have received from Doctor Edward Waldo Emerson, William Emerson's great-grandson. They are partly given in his "Chaplain of the Revolution", Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, LV, pp. 88*ff*. The latter gives much evidence as to Emerson's fervent feeling for the American cause, expressed in both word and action.

Attention is called to the impersonality of the Emerson diary story of events in Concord. It is entirely different from Berniere's. The British ensign has got no further than the "we" stage of self-expression; he has never learned that a statement of what *he* saw, and heard and did would make his narrative more interesting, and even more valuable. The minister falls into a parallel weakness because of a different point of view. He can write, if he wishes, an exact account of his own actions; but his endeavor is to make a definite and complete statement of the military actions of the day, without relation to himself. Considered from this angle, his diary is far more valuable and reliable than Berniere's; it is good historical material. Yet the minister himself sinks farther out of sight than the British officer. We can see, approximately, what Berniere did; but no reader of Emerson's diary would have any idea that it was he who proposed to make a stand in the town, or imagine that he did not pass the river. Emerson's "we" ("we retreated over the bridge", "we received the fire of the enemy") seems to include himself, but it refers solely to the Americans as a body. That Emerson did not cross the river will be evident from what is said below.

XIX

THAT there are many stories of what happened in Concord on that eventful day, as compared to few in Lexington, is not surprising. The stay of the regulars in Lexington was brief. In Concord they spent some hours, searching at different places, and coming into direct and sometimes unpleasant contact with the inhabitants. The light infantry at Colonel Barrett's and near the South Bridge, and the grenadiers in the village, made a pretty thorough search for military stores, while the Yankees tried to frustrate them. From the mass of traditional stories let us first endeavor to select those that are, in part at least, sustained by contemporary reference.

When the militia marched away from the liberty pole, they left their flag flying.[1] "We march'd into the Town," says Barker, "after taking possession of a Hill with a Liberty Pole on it and a flag flying which was cut down." Not merely the flag was cut down, but also the pole; Ripley calls it the first act of violence. From the poetic language of William Emerson's anniversary oration, we get a picture of the scene, as the soldiers cut down the symbol of resistance. "On yonder Height the red-dressed Ruffians gather—with what envenomed Spite and eager Force they strike to level with the Earth the lofty Spire erected as a token of our Determination to enjoy Liberty, or to resign Life:—it falls!—they shout as if they gained a mighty Conquest, and robbed a noble people of all their dearest Rights, and done the Feat that they were sent upon:—they shout again." It always gave

[1] It would be interesting to know what flag was used.

satisfaction to the British, and a sense of injury to the Americans, when a liberty pole was cut down.[1]

This anniversary oration of Emerson's collates itself well with stories that throw light upon its rounded and flowery periods. To begin with, it is difficult for the careless modern to realize how seriously the still puritan New Englander of 1775 took the Biblical injunction, "Swear not at all." That they themselves swore upon occasion is proved by the list of fines for that offence in the provincial army; that some of them also confessed their fault before the congregation is also stated. Much as they reprobated it in themselves, they abhorred it in others. "Hear Ashdod's language spoke," said Emerson, "and all the air is filled with curses causeless." And he brought the charge home to one individual. "What bold blaspheming Speeches rushed from the cursing Lips of the intemperate Pitcairn, who, like the Assyrian Chief, blasphemed our God and Cause! that made the boldest of our Sinners tremble!"

It is impossible not to see in this *intemperate* a reference to the story which first appeared in print in Shattuck's book sixty years later. "At Wright's tavern, Pitcairn called for a glass of brandy, and stirred it up with his bloody finger, remarking, 'He hoped he should stir the yankee blood so before night.'" [2] One of the last acts of Charles Hudson, the Lexington historian, was to protest against this story as an injury to an honest man and a good soldier. Yet referred to thus early by

[1] On the other hand, it gave grim pleasure to the provincials to learn that when during the siege of Boston Liberty Tree was cut down for fuel, a soldier was killed by falling from a branch.

[2] Shattuck, "History", p. 113. It is to be noted that Shattuck places this episode after the Fight. By that time no man of sense could fail to perceive the danger the detachment was in.

Emerson, it seems to have foundation in fact. But the speech is not that of the man who tried to stop the firing at Lexington, who was on friendly terms with Americans, and who was man enough to know that the Yankee blood was already sufficiently stirred. It seems likely that, exactly as Pitcairn and Smith were confused in the reports of the eye-witnesses at Lexington, so here in Concord the stupid bragging of some other officer was tagged upon the major.

One sacrilege is recorded by Emerson of which we have no other record. "And now see the rude Soldiers bursting every door that was not opened, and even *these* [i. e. the church doors] to show their hate to God and all Religion: —with their unhallowed Feet they trod this sacred Place, and took from hence the Book of God, with sacrilegious Hands, and threw it into the Flames." But if no other story has survived of this burning of the Bible, the incident makes clear the wisdom of the woman who earlier in the day is said to have carried the communion silver to Wright's Tavern and dropped it into the soft-soap barrel.[2] An English veteran of the continental wars would be likely to look for loot in promising places, and that some of them were glad to appropriate the property of the church was proved at Menotomy some hours later.

There is another passage in the Emerson oration on which tradition sheds light. "See *here* a revelling Crew drinking to Bacchus, and *there* a busy Knot of Satan's Workmen, destroying private Property merely for Sport."

[2] George Tolman tells this story in his "Wright's Tavern", p. 18, and adds that the silver was taken from the barrel "twenty-four hours later, so thoroughly blackened by the caustic stuff that it had to be reburnished by a silversmith." Reynolds ascribes the saving of the communion plate to a woman unnamed who buried it in her own soap barrel, "in the arch under a great chimney which is still standing." This was in the neighboring White Block, now gone.

(How curiously sounds the practical statement in the midst of the eloquent diction!) "See yet again, a less collected Club, flushed with the Success of their bold Enterprise, torturing a poor old decrepid and unarmed Man, with dreadful fear of an immediate and violent Death." But the horror is quite taken out of this passage by the parallel story which Ripley printed in 1827. "While in the village, the British seized and abused several persons, aged men, who were not armed. Among them was Dea. Thomas Barrett, brother of the Colonel. In his buildings there was a gun-factory, carried on by his son, Mr. Samuel Barrett, and men employed by him. The Deacon was a man noted for his piety and goodness, and for his mildness of disposition. Not appearing terrified or insulting, he began to remonstrate against their violence, and the unkindly treatment of the mother country against her colonies. When they threatened to kill him as a rebel, he calmly said, they would do better to save themselves that trouble, for he was old and should soon die of himself. Upon which they replied, 'Well, old daddy, you may go in peace'." In modern parlance, the soldiers searching for weapons had given the old man the "third degree", and finding him obdurate, let him go. Towards one who was at least abetting the arming of the provincials, the first treatment is not surprising, and the final clemency is good-natured.

But there is documentary evidence as to another passage in Emerson's oration. "To heighten more the Terrors of the Day, the Flames are kindled, in two different Places, by the stupid Fools, who scattered Firebrands where all the adjacent Buildings are in the greatest Hazard of being immediately consumed to Ashes, and the distressed Inhabitants drove out into the open Fields."

Those fires had their influence on the militia outside the town, but here let us examine what they were.

Some ten months afterward one Martha Moulton, "widow-woman", petitioned for a little monetary aid from the province for a service rendered. Her story gives the most intimate account that we have of happenings in the center of Concord that morning; though it is long, to paraphrase it would spoil both its vividness and its unconscious humor. It is therefore given entire. Mrs. Moulton, who lived in one of the little houses shown in Doolittle's print near the town house, on the square,

Humbly sheweth: That on the 19th day of April, 1775, in the forenoon, the town of Concord, wherein I dwell, was beset with an army of regulars, who, in a hostile manner, entered the town, and drawed up in form before the door of the house where I live; and there they continued on the green, feeding their horses within five feet of the door; and about fifty or sixty of them was in and out of the house, calling for water and what they wanted, for about three hours. At the same time, all our near neighbors, in the greatest consternation, were drawn off to places far from the thickest part of the town, where I live, and had taken with them their families and what of their best effects they could carry,—some to a neighboring wood, and others to remote houses, for security.

Your petitioner, being left to the mercy of six or seven hundred armed men, and no person near but an old man of eighty-five years, and myself seventy-one years old, and both very infirm. It may easily be imagined what a sad condition your petitioner must be in. Under these circumstances, your petitioner committed herself, more especially, to the Divine Protection, and was very remarkably helpt with so much fortitude of mind, as to wait on them, as they called, with water, or what we had,—chairs for Major Pitcairn and four or five more officers,—who sat at the door viewing their men. At length your

petitioner had, by degrees, cultivated so much favor as to talk a little with them. When all on a sudden they had set fire to the great gun-carriages just by the house, and while they were in flames your petitioner saw smoke arise out of the Town House higher than the ridge of the house. Then your petitioner did put her life, as it were, in her hand, and ventured to beg of the officers to send some of their men to put out the fire; but they took no notice, only sneered. Your petitioner, seeing the Town House on fire, and must in a few minutes be past recovery, did yet venture to expostulate with the officers just by her, as she stood with a pail of water in her hand, begging of them to send, and so forth. When they only said, 'O, mother, we won't do you any harm!' 'Don't be concerned, mother,' and such like talk. The house still burning, and knowing that all the row of four or five houses, as well as the school-house, was in certain danger, your petitioner (not knowing but she might provoke them by her insufficient pleading) yet ventured to put as much strength to her arguments as an unfortunate widow could think of; and so your petitioner can safely say that, under Divine Providence, she was an instrument of saving the Court House, and how many more is not certain, from being consumed, with a great deal of valuable furniture, and at the great risk of her life. At last, by one pail of water after another, they sent and did extinguish the fire. And now, may it please this honored Court, as several people of note in the town have advised your petitioner thus to inform the public of what she had done, and as no notice has been taken of her for the same, she begs leave to lay this her case before your honors, and to let this honored Court also know that the petitioner is not only so old as not to be able to earn wherewith to support herself, is very poor, and shall think her highly honored in the favorable notice of this honored Court. As what the petitioner has done was of a public as well as a private good, and as your honors are in a public capacity, your petitioner begs that it may not be taken ill, in this way, to ask in the most humble manner

something, as a fatherly bounty, such as to your great wisdom and compassion shall seem meet; and your petitioner, as in duty bound, for the peace and prosperity of this our American Israel, shall ever pray.[1]

In the Emerson story about Pitcairn we saw the beginning of the American legend about him, in which he appears as a bloodthirsty ogre. And though in this

[1] The court house and the town house were the same. The petition is to be found in Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 369. Its date is February 4, 1776. Martha Moulton, thus petitioning for reward for saving her own house, was granted three pounds by the general court.—Amos Barrett tells of the town-house fire as follows. "Thair was in the town House a number of intrenchen tools witch they carried out and Burnt them—at last they said it was Best to Burn them in the house and sot fire to them in the house—but our people Beg[d]. of them not to Burn the house and put it out it wont Long before it was set fire again but finally it warnt Burnt—their was about 100 Barrels of flower in Mr. Hubbards malt house they Rold that out and nock[d]. them to p[i]eces and Rold some in the mill pond whitch was saved after they was goon."

Shattuck varies the Moulton story by saying that the top of the town house was filled with powder. In such a case the regulars would either have rescued the powder for themselves, or they would have been glad to let it go up in smoke, they having removed themselves to a proper distance. There is no evidence that any powder, the most precious of all the stores, was found by the British.

Martha Moulton's statement as to the little exodus from the town is borne out by a pen-picture in the Emerson oration, and again by tradition. Emerson said, "Let's take a View of our (Concord's) Situation in this dark dismal Hour. —Its armed Inhabitants necessitated to retreat,—its passages strongly guarded; —the most of the Women and Children flee into the Woods and other Places of Safety, in the greatest Fear and Anxiety, Distress and Anguish imaginable! expecting never to return to their Habitations again. Methinks I view the mournful sight,—the frightened Mother, encompassed round with all her little Brood, fast clinging to her Clothes, all speaking at once impatient for an Answer, asking the Cause of all this dreadful Tumult! 'No more, my Loves,' says she, 'no more; let's run; our Father, save! or Dare we stop or linger here, or we shall all be killed.' "

The lighter side of the situation is told by Grindall Reynolds ("Historical and Other Papers: Concord Fight", p. 187). "Another, getting ready to take her children into the woods, in her confusion went to her drawer and put on a checked apron, which in those days was the proper adornment on state occasions. This she unconsciously did over and over again, until, when she recovered her wits in her hiding-place, she found she had on seven checked aprons."

Moulton petition we see him when very mild, taking his ease in a pause of this bad day, we find him once more in a third contemporary Concord statement, Gordon's "Letter", which is worth comparing with Gage's "Circumstantial Account" and with tradition.

In Gage's statement he quoted almost literally Smith's report. "Both the Colonel, and Major Pitcairn, having taken all possible Pains to convince the Inhabitants that no injury was intended them, and that if they opened their Doors when required, to search for said Stores, not the slightest Mischief should be done; neither had any of the People the least Occasion to complain, but they were sulky, and one of them even struck Major Pitcairn."

We know very well what would have happened to a Frenchman or Belgian who struck a Prussian major in 1914, or even what would have happened before that date if a Prussian officer were struck by a civilian of his own country.

The story of this striking is obscure; but whether the major struck or was struck, it is said that Ephraim Jones of Concord was the other man who figured in the episode. Gordon refers to the affair in connection with Pitcairn's responsibility for the firing at Lexington, and writes with heat:

To what I have wrote respecting Major Pitcairn, I am sensible his general character may be objected. But character must not be allowed to overthrow positive evidence when good, and the conclusions fairly deduced therefrom. Besides, since hearing from Mr. Jones in what shameful abusive manner, with oaths and curses, he was treated by the Major at Concord, for shutting the doors of his tavern against him and the troops; and in order to terrify him to make discoveries of stores; and

the manner in which the Major crowed over the two four-and-twenty pounders found in the yard, as a mighty acquisition, worthy the expedition on which the detachment was employed, I have no such great opinion of the Major's character; though, when he found that nothing could be done of any great importance by bullying, blustering, and threatening, he could alter his tone, begin to coax, and offer a reward. It may be said that this Jones was a jailer; yes, and such a jailer as I would give credit to, sooner than the generality of those officers that will degrade the British arms, by employing their swords in taking away the rights of a free people.[1]

This is obscure, until from another source tradition comes to help us. Samuel Adams Drake says[2] that Pitcairn had often been at Jones' tavern in Concord, sometimes in disguise—which would seem to mean, if anything, civilian clothes. Upon this morning, finding the tavern locked and Jones refusing to open to the soldiers, Pitcairn ordered the door broken open, and rushing in, bowled over the innkeeper. Now Jones was also the keeper of the jail. A threat with a pistol induced him to show where, in the jailyard adjoining, were the twenty-four-pounders, probably lying concealed. As these were pretty valuable to the Americans, we can understand the triumph of which Gordon complains. And then, Pitcairn's bluster having succeeded, he turned amiable, and ordered breakfast.[3]

[1] In Gordon's "History", published with the hope of an English sale, after Pitcairn's death, nothing appears unfavorable to Pitcairn.

[2] "Historic Fields and Mansions of Middlesex", p. 381.

[3] There are other pieces of tradition which go counter to this one. In the "Social Circle Memoirs", I, 132, is related of this Jones only that, knowing that the provincial treasurer had boarded at his tavern, the British placed him "under a guard of five men, their bayonets fixed and pointing toward him." He was presently released to "furnish refreshment at his bar." Frederic Hudson combines these two traditions, and has Jones confined for knocking

In all the stories here collected, wherein tradition and contemporary statement sustain and illuminate each other, we have found a fairly intimate view of Concord on that morning of excitement. It is plain that while some of the inhabitants fled through fear, others remained behind. So it was along the line of march later in the day. In Concord, at least, the people were justified in their trust in the British troops, for as even William Emerson grudgingly admitted, there was no loss of life in the village, and even no plundering. Viewed from this distance, at a time when the real horrors of war have so recently and so shockingly been demonstrated, we cannot join in our ancestors' blame of soldiers who did nothing worse than to cut down the liberty pole, invade the church, and obtain information by a few threats. It is certain that the troops were held in hand, and that the officers acted well.

Pitcairn down in an accidental collision, and adds that Jones refused to serve food or drink without pay. In his tavern was a chest belonging to the provincial treasurer, but Hannah Burns, living in the inn, claimed that the chamber in which the chest stood contained her property, and after an argument, saved it from discovery. Much of this probably goes back to Shattuck, who names the girl Barns. Drake's story, as he supplies it, has no Concord record. He says Pitcairn "paid exactly" for his breakfast.

XX

APART from the stories of the British occupation of Concord for which we have found some appearance of confirmation, there are a few which throw a light, not necessarily false, upon incidents of the morning.

Oldest is that told in 1805 by Abiel Holmes in his "American Annals", as having been "received verbally of Samuel Bartlett, Esq. now of Cambridge, who resided several years in Concord." The story is plain and good.

The shrewd and successful address of Captain Timothy Wheeler on this occasion deserves notice. He had the charge of a large quantity of provincial flour, which, together with some casks of his own, was stored in his barn. A British officer demanding entrance, he readily took his key, and gave him admission. The officer expressed his pleasure at the discovery; but captain Wheeler, with much affected simplicity, said to him, putting his hand on a barrel, "This is my flour. I am a miller, Sir. Yonder stands my mill; I get my living by it. In the winter I grind a great deal of grain, and get it ready for market in spring. This," pointing to one barrel, "is the flour of wheat; this," pointing to another, "is the flour of corn; this is the flour of rye; this," putting his hand on his own casks, "is *my* flour; this is *my* wheat; this is *my* rye; this is *mine*." "Well," said the officer, "we do not injure *private* property;" and withdrew, leaving this important depository untouched.[1]

That the British were successful elsewhere is admitted. Doolittle's print shows a distant group of them destroying stores. They took a number of barrels of flour,[2] broke

[1] Abiel Holmes' "American Annals", II, 326.

[2] Amos Barrett, who was son-in-law to the man from whom the flour was

open some, and rolled the rest into the mill pond. As the outer flour in the barrels swelled and made their containers waterproof, a good deal of it was salvaged. There was likewise salvaged most of the five hundred pounds of musket balls thrown into the water. Even the twenty-four-pounders, of which the British knocked off the trunnions, were later made serviceable. But the cannon carriages were burned, some barrels of wooden trenchers and spoons, and possibly some other stores.

Besides the town house, there was set on fire (according to Tolman) Reuben Brown's harness shop, where he had been making equipment for the provincials. But the fire was soon extinguished.

A tale is told by Shattuck that shows the invaders to have been kindly. "At Mr. Amos Wood's they paid a guinea apiece to the female attendants to compensate them for their trouble. They searched the house; and an officer observing one room fastened, significantly inquired of Mrs. Wood, "whether there were not some females locked up there?" By her evasive answer he was led to believe it was so, and immediately said, "I forbid anyone entering this room!"—and a room filled with military stores was thus fortunately preserved."

This was at the South Bridge, and men of the same company searched the house of Ephraim Wood. Shattuck says simply that he was not at home; but it is told that he came in sight of the South Bridge a little later, carrying on his back a keg of powder, for he was a very strong man. Seeing the guard of soldiers, he turned down the river, and taking a boat, crossed just before the soldiers came up.[1]

taken, said one hundred barrels. But Shattuck said "about sixty", and Tolman and Frederic Hudson follow him.

[1] "Social Circle Memoirs", I, 155; Shattuck's "History", p. 109.

Meanwhile the light infantry under Captain Parsons, arriving at the house of Colonel Barrett, began to search it for the stores which it might contain. Had they been observant, they might have been as successful as Pitcairn at the jail, if we may believe the tradition which says that some cannon were concealed in a field near by, and the place obscured by being plowed over, the ploughman being at work while the troops were in sight. That was not the time or place for everyday tasks, but no Briton suspected.[1]

With the warning that they had, the Barretts must have carried away a good deal of the movable stores. Emerson says that they were "happily secured" just before the troops arrived "by Transport into y^e^ Woods and other by-Places." It is said[2] that in the garret were musket balls, flints, and even cartridges, which for concealment had been put in casks and covered with feathers. The search cannot have been very thorough, for these were not found. So far as is known, the British found only some cannon carriages, which they were about to burn so near the barn that Mrs. Barrett remonstrated. They were therefore burned in the road.[3]

Here, as in the town, the troops behaved well. Though some one, it is true, stole some money, the officers offered to pay for the food which they had asked for. Mrs. Bar-

[1] This anecdote is in neither Ripley nor Shattuck, and I do not find it in print before Frederic Hudson's article of 1875. Hudson says that the cannon were buried and the place ploughed over; Tolman in 1901 adds that the ploughing was done while the troops were in sight; he has the cannon placed in a furrow and another furrow turned over them. Hudson's illustration shows the ploughman at work close to the soldiers.

[2] Ripley, "History of the Fight at Concord", p. 14; Shattuck's "History", p. 109.

[3] Frederic Hudson. Shattuck's "History", p. 109, says there was no time to burn them.

rett refused, saying, "We are commanded to feed our enemies." They then threw money in her lap, which she reluctantly accepted with the words, "This is the price of blood." Barrett's son Stephen, blundering into the house was mistaken for his father, and arrested. The officers said, "You must come along with us to Boston"; but when Mrs. Barrett told them that he was her son, they released him. When she refused to give spirits to a sergeant who demanded them, an officer sustained her, saying, "We shall have bloody work to-day,—we have killed men at Lexington." There was no violence here, nor bluster.

Nor was there violence, nor even search, at the house of Elisha Jones, hard by the North Bridge and opposite the Manse. Of the three companies left to hold the bridge, one was stationed at its western end, and two others were on hills on the eastern side.[1] According to local tradition the men of the two latter companies went to the Jones dooryard for water from the well. In the cellar and shed were many barrels of beef and some tons of salt fish—also in hiding was Jones himself, an officer in the militia, who, like the minister, chose to stay with his wife and young children rather than cross the bridge. Apparently the place was not even entered, for both the stores and the owner remained undiscovered. And no soldier entered the grounds of the Manse, though in full view were the minister and his frightened flock.

[1] Barker says, "1 of these Compys, was left at the Bridge, another on a Hill some distance from it, and another on a hill ¼ of a mile from that." Murdock says ("British in Boston", p. 33, *footnote*) that the company of the 43d was at the bridge, those of the 10th and 4th on the hills. Judge Keyes says ("Story of an Old House", p. 11) "the soldiers of the two companies then halted near this dooryard." Frederic Hudson gives a picture of the troops in the Jones yard, without accompanying text. As there was no military purpose that the troops could serve in such a place (since they did not go there to search) it is most likely that small squads went singly for water.

If now we take the sum of all the stories here assembled, whether or not supported by contemporary report, it does not appear that this invasion of the "ministerial army" was conducted in any other way than with reasonable kindness and decency. Another hour, and Smith might have got safely away, relieved to have spilled no more blood. He and Pitcairn were probably glad not to have met, so far, the able-bodied men of Concord.

But before the hour was up, these men had seen and misinterpreted the smoke rising from the town.

XXI

AFTER crossing the North Bridge, the little provincial force climbed to higher ground. Concord tradition takes them first to the Hunt farm on Punkatasset Hill; it is possible that some went there, but the main body were soon assembled on a lower hill much nearer to the river, on the Buttrick farm, at a place where they could watch the actions of the troops at the bridge. The spot is now marked by a tablet in the wall on modern Liberty Street.[1]

[1] Amos Barrett's letter can be read to support the idea that there was a "third position of the Americans" before the final one. He says that returning from the reconnaissance down Lexington road "we march[d]. into town and then over the north Bridge a little more than half a mild and then on a hill not far from the Bridge whair we could see and hear what was agoing on." The bridge is a little more than half a mile from the town, and Punkatasset is a little more than half a mile from the bridge. Mr. G. W. Hunt has provided me with the old family reasons for using the farm as a rendezvous, which are chiefly that it was an excellent lookout (from the doorstep, still preserved in position on the estate of Russell Robb, he watched the courthouse fire as a boy in 1849) and a meeting place of roads. It is very likely that some of the provincials were there, possibly all of them for a while. But Buttrick was likely to wish to protect his own house, and the final place chosen was the best possible for intercepting and drawing together the men from the Actons and Sudbury (the latter being warned away from the South Bridge by Stephen Barrett, posted near for the purpose. See Ripley's "History of the Fight at Concord", p. 12.) The men from Bedford and Carlisle would also come to the same spot. It is the proper place for the gathering ground for bold men, being scarcely more than two hundred yards from the bridge in a direct line, with safety behind for a rapid retreat, and with possibility of a quick stroke at the enemy.

Lacking accurate measurements, Ripley's statement means little ("a hill about one mile to the north of the meeting-house") but by the old roads Punkatassett is too far. He does, however, later state that a final move was made to a position on the high land at the northwest of the bridge, from which the center of the town was in full view, and the British before their eyes and within gunshot. Shattuck is quite definite as to the Buttrick position being the only one,

Outliers on Punkatasset, near the South Bridge, and on other roads, must have guided the approaching reinforcements to the Buttrick place. The stories of the rousing of the men from these other towns are numerous and thrilling. Bedford was early warned from Lexington, and expecting no fighting at that place, the minutemen and militia, under Jonathan Wilson and John Moore, marched to Concord where, according to Ripley, they were "seasonably on the ground." It has always been claimed, and there seems no strong reason for doubting it, that they bore the flag still preserved in the town, its sign an arm bearing a sword, perhaps the origin of the crest of Massachusetts.

Most romance attaches to the story of the coming of the Acton men, because of the fate of two of their number, killed at the North Bridge. Of Abner Hosmer little is known; but Isaac Davis, the captain, was the typical leader of young men, a gunsmith, and an ardent patriot. Much paper in the unfortunate period of controversy, and much eloquence in our days of spread-eagleism, were given to the Acton story; but to the modern mind there is more to touch the emotions in the simple statement of Davis's widow.

I, Hannah Leighton, of Acton, testify, that I am eighty-nine years of age. Isaac Davis, who was killed in the Concord Fight, in 1775, was my husband. He was then thirty years of age. We had four children; the youngest about fifteen months old. They were all unwell when he left me, in the morning; some of them with the canker-rash.

The alarm was given early in the morning, and my husband lost no time in making ready to go to Concord

saying that Barrett ordered the provincials "to march over the north bridge, near the present residence of Colonel Jonas Buttrick, and there wait for reinforcements."

with his company. A considerable number of them came to the house, and made their cartridges there. The sun was from one to two hours high when they marched for Concord.

My husband said but little that morning. He seemed serious and thoughtful; but never seemed to hesitate as to the course of his duty. As he led the company from the house, he turned himself round, and seemed to have something to communicate. He only said, "Take good care of the children," and was soon out of sight.

In the afternoon he was brought home a corpse. He was placed in my bedroom till the funeral. His countenance was pleasant, and seemed little altered.[1]

Besides the Bedford and Acton companies, which were probably nearly complete, there came to Concord the little force from near-by Carlisle, and groups or individuals from Chelmsford, Westford, and Littleton. In advance of the Westford company, which arrived too late for the fight at the bridge, came Lieutenant Colonel John Robinson of that town, and with him the Reverend Joseph Thaxter, at that time a candidate for the pulpit of Westford, who is said to have put pistols in his pockets, and come along. The Sudbury men, forced to make a long detour in order to avoid the guard at the South Bridge, were still a little distance from the North Bridge when the firing began. Concord men also came straggling back from their work of carting away the stores; but we know that some besides Emerson and Jones were delayed because of their families. Timothy Minot, for example,

[1] Josiah Adams, "Centennial Address on the founding of Acton", Boston, 1835; he also published a Letter to Lemuel Shattuck, Esq., 1850. The deposition is in both. The reader will note that the men made up their cartridges before marching to Concord, as Stark's men did before starting for Bunker Hill. It was the 1775 idea of preparedness, to leave this important thing undone.

thought it his "incumbent duty" to secure his family, and being unable to cross the river, was only a spectator of the fighting.[1]

It is to be remembered that among the men thus gathered there was no certain knowledge that men had been killed at Lexington. The Lincoln men had brought the rumor, but no one had confirmed it. The reason given for Barrett's orders not to fire first, twice issued, was that the Concord men were not sure of the Lexington killing. Emerson says this both in his diary and in his oration of a year later; Ripley says so, and Shattuck. Amos Barrett says only, "we had stricked orders not to fire firs then to fire as fast as we could"; but Joseph Thaxter, in his letter of the same year (1825) writes, "we had then no certain knowledge that any had been killed at Lexington." Yet Charles Hudson held that the Concord men ought to have believed the news, and Josiah Adams, with his accustomed bitterness, argued that the news must have travelled six miles in five hours when so many were literally running from town to town. Adams did recollect that the British held the roads and bridges between Lexington and Concord, but ironically demanded whether no one could find a boat, or could swim. He failed to supply a reason why any one should risk meeting a patrol of British to carry the news.—After all, the de-

[1] See his deposition, Shattuck's "History", p. 348. Many stories, and claims now difficult to judge, are to be found as to various persons' presence at the fight. W. Wheildon, in his "New Chapter in the History of Concord Fight", states that nine young men of Groton, scenting trouble because of the arrival of cannon in their town, sent from Concord, started for Concord before the arrival of any other alarm, and were "at or near" the Bridge at the time of the fight. But S. A. Green, himself a Groton man, points out that this is mere "tradition, which is history on crutches, always an unsafe and uncertain support." (2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XII, 77.)

ciding fact is that the Concord men held to their doubt, and acted upon it.[1]

The number of provincials finally assembled on the height above the bridge may properly be estimated at between three hundred and four hundred and fifty men.[2] They were arranged on the Buttrick field by Joseph Hosmer, still acting as adjutant. In the regimental muster of five weeks before,[3] the Concord companies had had the right of the line, as the oldest. Here on the ground were both minutemen and militia; Shattuck says that the latter were, as a body, on the left of the line.[4]

Waiting uneasily, and watching the smoke frequently rising from the town, the provincials spent some time. Barrett was now on the field again, and it is said that he was in consultation not merely with his officers, but with

[1] For arguments on this point, or statements, see Emerson's diary. His oration says, "Averse, utterly averse to begin the bloody Quarrel, or draw the Sword, not even under all the most irritating Insults, against their British Brethren, they determined never to be the Aggressors, being wholly ignorant, at this Time, of the Barbarities committed in the Murder of so many of our Brethren in a neighboring Town." For Thaxter's letter see the bibliography. Hudson discussed the question in his "History of Lexington", I, 157, *footnote*. For Josiah Adams and his accustomed method of writing history, see p. 188, *footnote*.

[2] Ripley says "about four hundred and fifty"; the depositions of Bradbury Robinson and others "about three hundred", and of the British lieutenant Gould, "about three or four hundred." These were eye-witnesses; but so was Barker, who says "about 1000 strong." The Richard Pope MS. says two thousand. Gage says "a large Body", and "in great numbers." The larger numbers are impossible. Stedman says three or four hundred.

[3] This was on March 13. For the positions of the companies, see depositions of Thomas Thorp and Solomon Smith, 1835.

[4] On the march down to the bridge, therefore, the Concord old men were probably in the rear. The command of this miscellaneous force fell to Colonel Barrett, as the senior officer on the ground. It is stated by Shattuck that Abijah Pierce of Lincoln was colonel of the minutemen; but he is elsewhere referred to as captain and major at that time.

citizens of Concord,[1] probably members of the local committee of correspondence, or the selectmen of the town. It may have been half past nine, or later,[2] when the adjutant, seeing "an unusual smoke" rising from among the houses, went to this council and earnestly asked, "Will you let them burn the town down?"[3] It was the signal for the fight. That little council, of simple men unused to great decisions, yet aware how momentous their action was, resolved that the militia should cross the bridge and march into the town.[4]

The decision was evidently unanimous. Smith, the Lincoln captain, offered with his company to dislodge the British from the bridge.[5] But for some reason, perhaps be-

[1] Ripley makes this statement. See also deposition of Bradley Stone in 1845 (Adams' Letter to Shattuck, p. 19) reporting the statement of William Parkman, who claimed to be a member of that council.

[2] There are two statements as to the time of the fight. Captain David Brown wrote: "April 19, 1775. The squirmish was at Concord north bridge . . . between nine and ten of the clock in the forenoon." (Quoted in Josiah Adams' "Centennial Address", p. 32, *footnote*.) The deposition of Bradbury Robinson and others, April 23, 1775, says "near ten of the clock."

[3] See Shattuck, p. 111. Lossing, in his "Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution", credits Hosmer with a stirring speech; but the one of local tradition, quoted above, was the most stirring that Hosmer ever made.

[4] Ripley calls this a council of war, "the most pregnant with events, perhaps, that ever was held." According to him (and Shattuck repeats him) the decision was "to march into the middle of the town for its defence, or die in the attempt." Ripley adds in a note that "Major Buttrick and Captain Davis used this expression, as numbers testify." Josiah Adams, in his sneering fashion, demanded why the march into the town was not made.

[5] Frothingham ("Siege of Boston", p. 68, *footnote*) quotes the following, probably testimony affecting Smith's claim for damages for the loss of his horse.

"Lincoln. November, 1776. This may certify, that Captain William Smith, of Lincoln, in the County of Middlesex, appeared on Concord parade early in the morning of April 19, 1775, with his company of minute-men; was ordered to leave his horse by the field-officer, and take post on an adjacent hill,—the British troops possessing the North Bridge. He voluntarily offered, with his company, to endeavor to dislodge them, leaving his horse at the tavern; by

cause of the known determination and energy of Davis of Acton, the honor of leading the attack was given to him.[1]

which means, on their retreat, the horse, &c., were carried off, with one of their wounded men. John Buttrick, Major."

This is a strangely incoherent document, with its chronology completely mixed, yet with the fact of Smith's offer satisfactorily clear. Frothingham says it is in the Massachusetts archives, but it is not to be found there.

[1] Around the story of the position of the Acton troops rose a bitter one-sided controversy, conducted by Josiah Adams of Acton and Framingham in 1835. Adams was incensed by the claims for Concord raised by Ripley and Shattuck, Ripley having stated that at the muster above the bridge Davis took the position on the right of the line that did not belong to his company; and Shattuck making the quite contradictory statement that the Acton men were not on the hill at all, but that Davis, arriving with his company on the lower road just as the main body marched down from the height, took and kept the lead. Shattuck also claimed that David Brown's Concord company marched up alongside the Acton men, and so were equally in front, So far as can now be seen, neither Ripley nor Shattuck had any ground for their statements, and the late depositions brought forward by Adams support the statements in my text. In an address at the Acton centennial, 1835, and a letter to Shattuck published in 1850, Adams attacked both writers savagely, extolled Davis, and went so far as to make the claim that a Concord captain had refused the lead, saying he "should rather not go", supporting it by a deposition made by Bradley Stone at second hand in 1845. Adams made a great to-do over the question whether Davis was killed by a first or a second fire, and angered himself over Shattuck's statement that three men were killed at the bridge, almost demanding to have the third corpse produced. He was furious that the monument of 1836 should have been on the spot where the British stood and not the Americans, considering it an insult to Acton, and forgetting the expense of building and maintaining the bridge, taken down years before. Rising to his climax, he claimed that the lack of action after the fight was because Davis was dead, and that if he had not come, there would have been no fight at all. The whole is an example of what intemperate belief in a theory will do not merely to a writer, but also to the theory. As Ripley controverted the Lexington claims, so Adams defended them. A specimen of his method is seen in the following. Ripley stated that all the British taken at Lexington were "willing captives", going on to explain that (as one of them told him) they had purposely straggled, taking that method to desert. Adams seized upon the phrase "willing captives", and tore it to pieces, ignoring Ripley's explanation of it. Ripley and Shattuck made no reply.

It has been said, and the statement is supported by one of Adams's own depo-

It will be remembered that from the field where the provincials mustered, a road, now vanished, ran directly down the slope until it met the lower road at almost right angles, perhaps two hundred yards from the bridge. With Barrett directing at the top, the minutemen began their march. Said Thaddeus Blood, "I heard him several times charge the companies not to fire first, as we were marching to the bridge." The march was deliberately begun. Captain Miles of Concord said "that he went to the services of the day with the same seriousness and acknowledgment of God which he carried to church." [1] Soberly, then, with no shouts or cheers or marching songs, the little column began its advance. They marched two and two, and from the front of the thin line the Acton fifer shrilled the notes of "The White Cockade."[2]

Leading the Acton company was Davis. By his side was John Buttrick, and with him Robinson of Westford, acting as aide. Buttrick offered the command to his superior in rank; Robinson generously, and properly, declined.[3] But though he would not deprive the Concord

sitions (Amos Baker's) that the lead was given to the Acton men because they alone had bayonets. No contemporary evidence of this is known.

There is pleasanter Acton literature than Adams's. Pierpont wrote a descriptive poem of which a part has been already quoted. And another is the long speech by James Trask Woodbury, addressing the Massachusetts House of Representatives in favor of an appropriation for erecting a monument at Acton.

[1] Ripley gives these words, quoting them as spoken to "one of us." It will be remembered that Ripley's history was written by himself "with other citizens of Concord." Josiah Adams accuses Shattuck of being one of them, which seems very likely.

[2] Charles Handley's deposition, 1835, sworn to before Josiah Adams, Justice of the Peace, who wrote below, "The witness *whistled* the tune, which was known to me by that name." Adams' "Letter to Shattuck", p. 19.

[3] The authority for this was young John Buttrick, fifer, who was waked that

major of command of his own men, Robinson claimed the right to march with him in front. And somewhere behind them in the ranks, carrying his brace of pistols, young parson Thaxter still came along.

The order of the companies is not clearly known. The Acton men marched in front, the minute companies of David Brown and Charles Miles of Concord followed, and the Concord militia company of Captain Nathan Barrett was the fourth, with the Lincoln and Bedford companies next. Behind came the remaining companies in a long line, down the narrow road.[1]

One must smile over this picture tenderly, with pride in those dead-and-gone blood kin of ours. Here were men risking their lives because something was wrong that they would set right. It made no difference that facing them were soldiers, not merely symbols of a distant overwhelming power, but the immediate sign that behind them in the village were disciplined men equal in force to themselves. It made no difference to them that they wagered life, and their roofs and acres, and the happiness of their wives and children. Isaac Davis had said, "I haven't a man that's afraid to go." Neither had any captain there.

They reached the lower road and turned the corner, taking now a straight line toward the redcoats at the bridge. These, at the first sign that the militia was going to attack, had gathered all three of their companies on that same westward side of the bridge; but now they

morning early by his father and told to prepare for the work of the day. He "repeatedly affirmed that he was present and heard the conversation between his father and Colonel Robinson." "History of Westford", p. 105. The recent film by the Yale University Press, "The Eve of the Revolution", excellent in so many respects, shows Buttrick on horseback, which is of course wrong.

[1] For this order of the companies, see Ripley, p. 17.

AMOS DOOLITTLE'S THIRD PLATE.

"THE ENGAGEMENT AT THE NORTH BRIDGE IN CONCORD."

Showing the Advance of the Provincials led by Robinson and Buttrick, and the Flight of the British.

hastily retreated across it, leaving a few who began to take up the planks. Seeing this, Buttrick called on them to stop, and quickened his own pace. The British returned to their ranks. Two or three shots were then fired by some of them into the river; they were seen to strike on the right of the marching men. The warning being unheeded, a single gun was next fired, the bullet from which passed under Robinson's arm and wounded Luther Blanchard of Acton and Jonas Brown of Concord.[1] The minutemen were then seventy-five yards, or less, from the regulars. At that range the British fired their volley. Amos Barrett wrote, "their balls whisled well." But they did more. Isaac Davis, just raising his gun to fire, sprang high in the air and fell dead. At the same time Abner Hosmer, private in the Acton company, dropped and died.[2]

Buttrick, who is said to have leaped into the air as he turned to give his order, shouted, "Fire, fellow soldiers, for God's sake, fire!" [3] The word ran down the ranks. "The cry of Fire, Fire, was made from front to rear!" [4] Amos Barrett said, "We was then all orded to fire that could fire and not kill our own men." Steadying himself, Buttrick fired his own piece, and a volley from almost all of the provincials followed. A few more shots

[1] Ripley's "History of the Fight at Concord", and Shattuck's "History of the Town of Concord."

[2] Consult Ripley, Shattuck, Amos Barrett (who saw the splash of the balls in the river), depositions of Thomas Thorp and Solomon Smith (who also saw them) Blood's statement (likewise) and Woodbury's speech (tradition of Davis's fall).

[3] Josiah Adams, to whom nothing was good that came out of Concord, suggested that Buttrick was frightened. See his "Address", p. 30: "Suppose this to be the language of command, and not of terror and dismay, it was surely impossible to do less."

[4] Thaddeus Blood's statement.

may have come from the British, but they were scattering. Their morale broken at this first encounter by the bullets that came smashing in amongst them,[1] the British turned and fled, leaving two men lying on the ground.

That was Concord Fight, an affair of but two or three minutes, physically so little, spiritually so significant. Five men were killed, the defenders of the bridge were flying—and the way lay open for all that America since has done.

[1] The bullet of those days, three quarters of an inch in diameter (or to be exact, seventy-three hundredths of an inch) was no such neat thing as our modern sharp-pencil (thirty hundredths) which drills its way almost without shock. The blow of the old round ball, when not fatal, was staggering.

XXII

SIMPLE as is the bare story of the Fight, there are aspects of it that require discussion. Fortunately, apart from the controversy carried on practically alone by one Acton defender sixty years later, there never has been dispute as to the facts of the skirmish. The British never denied that they fired the first shot.[1] For them the war had opened at Lexington.

The interesting question is why the British fire was so ineffective, and their resistance so short. In the answer to this is involved, of course, the factor of their opponents. With a narrow pass to defend, it might not seem such tremendous odds for a hundred regulars, having the advantage of the ground, to withstand four times their number of militia, which are proverbially, in American history no less than elsewhere, vacillating and undependable.

It has been natural, ever since the publication of Lieutenant Barker's diary in 1877, to blame the luckless captain in command of the three companies at the bridge. As Barker tells the story, the fault lies very clear. When the number of the Americans on the heights seemed dangerously large, Captain Laurie drew his three companies together and formed them in the road, beyond the bridge, where for "a long time very near an hour" they waited attack. Laurie sent word back to Smith, but no

[1] Gage said the regulars returned the American fire, but Barker wrote that the fire "began from a dropping shot on our side", and captured Lieutenant Gould testified that "we engaged, and gave the first fire." Gordon wrote, "the soldiers [i. e. captured regulars] that knew any thing of the matter, with whom I conversed, made no scruple of owning the same that Mr. Gould deposed."

reinforcement came. When the Americans began their march, Laurie retreated to the Concord side of the bridge, "which by the bye he ought to have done at first and then he wou'd have had time to make a good disposition, but at this time he had not, for the Rebels were got so near him that his people were obliged to form the best way they cou'd as soon as they were over the Bridge, the three companies got one behind the other so that only the front one cou'd fire. . . . The others not firing the whole were forced to quit the Bridge and return toward Concord." And apparently it was all Captain Laurie's fault.

Now what was the right thing for the captain of such a small detachment to do in such a situation?

Marshal Saxe worked out his own solution, already described: the front man of each file should fire in rapid succession the muskets of the others as handed forward to him, officers directing the fire; the files relieving each other, the fire could continue indefinitely. He felt sure of success in any attempt to "dislodge the enemy from any post on the other side of the river"; but these were only Saxe's "Reveries", and no one put them in practice.[1]

But as the situation was no uncommon one, it had long been met by the British book of tactics. The problem was to maintain a steady fire along a narrow way, simple enough now with a machine gun or even with repeating rifles. The men of the eighteenth century worked out their own solution for firelocks; Bland in 1753 had it laid down; Pickering took it over entire in 1775; it was still in the books of the early nineteenth century. It was called "street firing." No man such as Laurie, captain of a picked company, long enough in the service to be

[1] Saxe's "Reveries", p. 99.

the senior of the eight officers at the bridge, could fail to be acquainted with it. It is impossible not to suppose that he meant to put it in practice as he drew his men up in the column which Barker criticizes, in position to sweep the narrow bridge.

The manœuver was not unduly complicated. "To perform the street firing, form the battalion into a column. . . . . When the commanding officer gives the words, 'Take care to charge by street firing!—charge!' the officer commanding the first platoon . . . gives the words, 'Make ready! Present! Fire!'"[1]

At this second command the front rank was to kneel, the two rear ranks to *lock*, the fire was to be delivered. "As soon as the platoon has fired, they come instantly to a recover, and the officer gives the words, 'To the right and left, Turn!'" Then the first three ranks were to break right and left, march down the sides of the column, and reuniting in the rear, load and make ready.

The scheme was so devised as to be used whether at a halt, advancing, or retreating. To maintain a fixed position, the second platoon was to move forward as soon as the first had vacated its place, and fire from the same ground. To advance, it went beyond the place; to retire, it fired from its own place as soon as the first platoon had unmasked it. The rear platoons accommodated themselves to the position and pace of the leaders. By the time it was the first platoon's turn to fire once more, the column was ready to begin the whole operation over again. No, the system was not complicated; it should be clear even to a lay reader, and Bland says confidently of it:

[1] Pickering's "Easy Plan of Discipline." (In the old sense, discipline is our modern drill.) Pages 119*ff*. "Take care" was commonly used for our "Ready." "Charge" is our "discharge."

It is in this manner, when you have not time to raise a breastwork, that a pass, bridge, road, or street, is to be maintained against the enemy, by the divisions sustaining one another, and firing in their turn; which may be continued as long as there is an occasion, almost without intermission by one battalion only.[1]

"May be continued as long as there is an occasion!" Poor Captain Laurie. Why on this occasion did his troops fail him?

Why but for lack of experience, discipline, and drill? Why also but because of a poor system of shifting officers? As to the first, here was Barker, our grumbler and know-it-all, evidently in complete ignorance that there was any purpose in forming those companies in column. How many others there were equally in the dark? What chance had been given, in the winter just spent in Boston, for officers and men to practice this evolution? Just a little firing at a mark, a little guard-mounting, a march or two into the country, is all we can gather from the diaries. Nothing was done, then, to teach the men how to defend a street, in spite of the fact that Gage had been afraid of an attack some months before. If any training had been given the men, would they not have shown it now? Had Laurie, in his ample time, even warned his subordinates of what he was going to attempt? He had no support in it.

As to the shifting of officers, we have already seen how curious a system it was that put a colonel of infantry and a major of marines in command of a mixed force

[1] Though Laurie had (according to Barker) nearly an hour in which he was expecting the advance of the Americans, he did nothing to "raise a breastwork." Of course he was expecting Parsons' return from the Barrett farm, yet he might have made some preparation against attack, except that it was not the British way.—Though his battalion was small, his bridge was proportionally narrow.

from several regiments. It was paralleled here at the bridge. Here were light companies from the 43d, the 10th, and the 4th regiments. The captain of the 10th had gone to Colonel Barrett's, and his ensign, De Berniere, was with him. The lieutenant of the 4th was in temporary command of the company of the 43d, whose captain, Laurie, had command of the whole. There was with them a lieutenant of the 38th.[1] It was a strange method of securing steadiness and confidence among the men. Had Gage forgotten Wolfe's advice that young officers should live with their men, for the good of the service?[2]

And so, after all, Laurie's security, which Bland's rules should have guaranteed him, was undermined. Perhaps some day he applied to his own case the words of a military writer, then only recently published:

> It may be remarked, that besides the advantage in time of necessity, which might arise from the knowledge that officers acquire by having practised such manœuvres, and being then able to execute them readily, that a confidence must necessarily be formed also among the men, from their knowing themselves in such a position, the strength and advantage of which have already been explained to them by the field officers. This will be guarding in the best manner against those panics and disorders, to which the frailty of the human heart often drives the soldier, for want of that principle of honor to support them, inherent in the officer as a gentleman.[3]

[1] I take these facts from the footnotes to the "British in Boston" (pp. 33–35), the editor of which, Harold Murdock, has taken great pains to ascertain the positions of officers and companies.

[2] General Wolfe's "Instruction to Young Officers", 2d. ed., London, 1780, pp. 1, 2, 49–50.

[3] Quoted in Simes' "Military Guide", first appendix. Philadelphia, 1776. The author was a British lieutenant colonel.

It is true that one error may have been committed by Laurie himself, and if so, it was a serious one. The drill books warned that space should be left at the flanks for the retiring of the men with empty guns. If no such space were left, confusion was inevitable.[1]

When it was all put to the test, events must have proceeded somewhat as follows. As the Americans advanced, the first guns were fired by the British officers from their fusees, the first few as warning, into the river, then one at least at the provincials, for it gave wounds. Laurie then giving the word, his three front ranks fired, and two Americans were killed. It has often been asked why the volley was so ineffective.

Amos Barrett gave his answer. "It is straing that their warnt no more killed but they fird to high." Too high an aim might drop the balls into the companies behind—and men behind were wounded, for a Lincoln man, cut by a bullet, concluded they were firing jack-knives.[2] Yet by the European standard the mortality was decently high. "I have seen whole volleys fired," wrote Marshal Saxe, "without even killing four men," and told a remarkable story to illustrate his point. He referred to the volleys along a regimental front common in European warfare, such as were vainly attempted at Bunker Hill. Yet here a single company had fired and killed two men. They had done better at Lexington, but there the distance was shorter. Considering the poor tools in their hands, the British firing was not bad.

There entered then into the fight the other necessary

[1] Thaddeus Blood (see Bibliography) wrote that the British "formed part on the road and part on each side." Space may not have been left for the easy retreat of the front platoon or company.

[2] Amos Baker's deposition, 1835.

factor, the adversary. One wonders if Barrett and Buttrick did not know that it was considered a military advantage to hold the fire of charging troops. If the English at Fontenoy issued the challenge to the French, "Gentlemen of the Guard, fire first!" they had at heart a grim purpose. "I shall appeal to the experience of all mankind," wrote Saxe, "if any single discharge was ever so violent, as to disable an enemy from advancing afterwards, to take ample revenge, by pouring in his fire, and at the same instant rushing in with fixed bayonets. It is by this method only, that numbers are to be destroyed, and victories obtained."[1] Thus besides their moral purpose (or political, it may be) in waiting to be attacked, the provincials would be gaining a military advantage as well.

If Laurie's "street firing" had successfully been continued, the provincials would have received a check, and there might have been a deadlock at the bridge, with the advantage on the side of the British. But unbroken by the British fire, the Americans came on steadily.[2] Green troops on the advance are as dangerous as veterans until they begin to question the result, and the Americans felt no doubt of the outcome. Paying no attention to the fall of Davis, they fired and still advanced.

Their volley was more deadly than the British; they may have aimed the better, but also more men fired.

[1] This quotation and the following, from Saxe's "Reveries", p. 28, are consecutive in the original. Wolfe said, "A column that receives the enemy's fire, and falls immediately in amongst them, must necessarily defeat them, and create a very great disorder in their army." Quoted in Pickering's "Easy Plan", p. 169.

[2] Barker says that the Americans "halted and fronted." But there is no other evidence that they stopped for even a moment.

When Thaxter wrote that the Americans fired over one another's heads [1] he spoke of a thing impossible in these days: the level flight of a modern bullet would make the British safe against the fire of any but the front ranks. But with the old firelocks of short range a man needed only elevate his muzzle and blaze away, with the chance (there could be no science to it) of hitting the enemy if he missed his own front rank—and even without rear sights he could be sure of the latter. Here again Doolittle throws light on the military situation. His engraving shows the whole column of the Americans asmoke, not only along the banks of the river, but even up the rising road.

It was said that some of the provincials, wishing a clear sight at the enemy, leaped the wall on the northern side of the causeway, and fired from the field. The thing is quite possible.[2]

And Laurie's men were struck with panic. Among them was the company of the 10th which opened the fire at Lexington. One wonders—one is inclined to hope that they were in front. Instead of seeing through the smoke a broken enemy, they saw Buttrick and Robinson step upon the bridge, the Acton men behind them. Here was every element of "those panics and disorders to which the frailty of the human heart often drives the

[1] *Historical Magazine*, Vol. xv, 206. "Our people then fired over one another's heads."

[2] Murdock says that the road was curving. Perhaps he had in mind Simmons' painting in the State House in Boston. But the road was straight, as Doolittle shows in his print, and as can be proved to-day by going over the ground.—Thomas Thorp and Solomon Smith, testifying in 1835, said that they never knew of the Americans leaping over the wall to fire. But they were in the Acton company, in front, and such firing would then have happened behind their backs.

soldier." The front ranks were unable to extricate themselves, and the officers did not help them. Four officers were wounded out of eight; a sergeant was injured; two privates were down, a third was mortally hit, several were wounded.[1] The Americans still came on. And Laurie's men broke. Doolittle's print[2] shows a single rank still firing, as if the poor devil of a commander, helped, let us hope, by the unwounded Barker,[3] held a

[1] The casualties at the bridge are here given from Barker. He says that three were killed. Gage says that the provincials "killed three men, wounded four Officers, one Sergeant, and four private Men." Two of the killed were buried at the bridge.

[2] Doolittle is not thorough as to bayonets, for he shows only the front ranks on each side equipped with them, except for two British flankers in the nearer field, in act of flight. If Josiah Adams ever saw the Doolittle print, he might have used it as proof of the second volley, on which his heart was so set that he made poor old Thomas Thorp and Solomon Smith testify a second time concerning it, though still they hedged against him, and must have vexed him. Adams must have been as persistent as Doctor Ripley in his search for testimony. Read Emerson's memorandum of July 30, 1835. "It is affecting to see this old man's [Thaddeus Blood's] memory taxed for facts which occurred 60 years ago at Concord Fight. Doctor Ripley like a keen hunter unrelenting follows him up and down vexing him with questions; yet cares little for the facts the man can tell but much for the confirmation of the printed history." But Blood of his own accord wrote a story of the fight which at his death was found among his papers.

[3] As I have called attention to the impersonality of Berniere's and Emerson's diaries, let me do the same by Barker's. No more than the others does he give any idea of his personal participation in the scenes at the bridge, except when he says "our scattered disposition", and that the rebels were "coming down upon us." For the rest of the narrative of the Fight he does not even use the *we*, but speaks of the British companies as *they:* "they remained a long time very near an hour, the three Companies expecting to be attacked by the Rebels." Indeed, when he comes to the action, he seems even to wash his hands of responsibility, referring everything to Laurie; "for the Rebels were got so near him that his people were obliged to form the best way they cou'd . . . the three companies got one behind the other so that only the front one cou'd fire." At the end he is entirely distant from the battle. "The others not firing, the whole were forced to quit the Bridge and return toward Concord." On the retreat he again returns to the *we*. In the whole long entry for the 19th he uses the first

few veterans to this last act. But then they too, with empty guns, had to follow the rest.

person singular but once, when he says "I since heard it was owing to a mistake of the Orders."

Mackenzie's diary has the same impersonality. Once he says "I have no doubt." For the rest it is all *we*.

Perhaps it is the nature of his subject that makes Paul Revere's "Letter" an "I" production. He went on his ride alone, and so had to speak directly of himself. But he drew pictures—of crossing the river, of meeting the officers, of seeing the troops. For Revere, as any one knows who has studied his silver (not his engravings!) was an artist, and was bound to have an idea of the value of words.

XXIII

ONE participant in the battle scene stood by himself, unnoticed, but with his heart set upon the success of the Americans. In Gordon's "Letter", following the custom of giving his sources which makes that document so valuable, the historian writes, "The Rev. Mr. Emerson of Concord, living in the neighborhood of the bridge, who gave me the account [i. e., of the fight] went near enough to see it, and was nearer the Regulars than the killed. He was very uneasy till he found that the fire was returned, and continued till the Regulars were drove off."

It is family tradition that Emerson did not go inside the house, but that he remained outside, giving comfort to the frightened women and children that crowded his grounds. At the instance of Doctor Edward W. Emerson in 1888, a granddaughter of William Emerson wrote to an older sister, and received the following reply. Though so much later in time, it is only two generations removed from the event, and in fact contains the report of an eyewitness, given to the writer.

Dear Sister It is a great mistake that our Grandfather remained in the house on the 19th of April—Grandmama told me herself that she felt hurt because he did not stay more with her, & once when he was feeding the women and children with bread & cheese she knocked on the window & said to him that she thought she needed him as much as others The lane in front of the house was nearly filled with people who came to the minister's house for protection Then again Grandmama said that she sat by the window & saw the battle at the bridge, & Grandfather was surely with them there [i. e. at the bridge] for he had been holding back our men from firing

but at last the same as gave permission—then the firing began & those two British soldiers were killed.[1]

The fondly feminine idea that Emerson, on the Concord side of the river, was controlling the fire of the Americans on the other, seems to contain an echo of the old New England belief in the authority of a minister. But from this family tradition, coupled with Gordon's contemporary statement direct from Emerson, it is clear that, seeing the approach of the Americans to the western end of the bridge, Emerson hastened toward the eastern end. His heart was in the event; he must have been burning with anxiety to see whether the provincials would follow their training. Five weeks before, at the sermon at the muster, he had preached to those very men:

But then, let me drop this one Word:—Let every single Step taken in this most intricate Affair, be upon the Defensive. God forbid that we should give our Enemies the Opportunity of saying justly that we have brought a civil War upon ourselves, by the smallest offensive Action.[2]

If it was an offensive action for the provincials to march in military order, with guns in their hands, up to the guard at the bridge, then the Americans were the aggressors.[3] But Emerson saw that they held their fire. He counted the actions, and wrote in his diary: "These Orders were so punctually observ'd yt [that] we rec^{d} y^{e} Fire of y^{e} Enemy in 3 several & seperate Discharges of their Pieces, before it was return'd, by our command [ing] Officer." [4]

[1] MS. copy of the original letter, loaned by Doctor Edward W. Emerson.

[2] MS. copy of the sermon, lent by Doctor Edward W. Emerson.

[3] American letters of the time bring forward the pretence that the provincials were intending to cross the bridge as simple travelers.

[4] The three discharges would be the warning guns fired into the river, the single

And Emerson saw more. Out of the long passage, full of obscure poetical and biblical diction, in which he moralised on the Fight in his oration of a year later, stand out the words, "Davis and Hosmer . . . I saw them fall full in Front of Battle." [1]

One more word—conjectural—as to Emerson at the bridge. Gordon tells the story of an incident immediately after the Fight. "The fire was returned, a skirmish ensued, and the troops were forced to retreat, having several men killed and wounded, and lieutenant Gould (who would have been killed, had not a minister present prevented) with some others taken." Emerson, nearer to the regulars than the American killed, may well have been the hero of the episode.

If the story is true, it shows us one more side of Emerson. Much as we like his martial fire, we admire his other qualities. In him the soldier was mastered by the husband and father, and by the pastor of more than his own flock. It is right that if this glimpse of him shows him in action, it shows him saving life.[2]

shot that wounded two men, and the first volley. Some counts were otherwise: the Lincoln and Concord group depositions say "first, three guns, one after the other, and then a considerable number more." Thaxter wrote in 1824, "They fired one gun, a second, a third, and then the whole body."

[1] The MS. copy of the Emerson oration (of which the original is not at present to be found) says, "I saw them fall in Front of Battle," with a pencilled insertion of the word *full*, in another hand, as if for a correction.

[2] The reader will note the doubt implied as to this Gordon anecdote. In favor of the story are the following considerations: The story is told not in Gordon's "Letter", but in his "History", I, 311. In this later narrative Gordon names none of his authorities (as he did in the letter) and following this practice, would not have named Emerson. It is to be remembered that Gordon spoke both with Emerson and with Gould. Now Gould was wounded in the heel at the bridge, and though no prisoners are said to have been taken there, he may have been

captured, and if able to hobble, released to be dressed by the surgeons in the village.

Against this is first of all the general belief that no prisoners were taken at the Fight. The story as ordinarily told of Gould is that after his wound had been dressed he started for Boston in a chaise in advance of the troops, met Percy in Menotomy, coming out, gave him news of the fighting (see below) and was taken prisoner a little farther on. This may have been his second capture, but it is also possible that upon this occasion some minister saved his life.

A man of means, Gould offered two thousand pounds, more than a year's income, for his release, but was exchanged for one Josiah Breed, of Lynn, captured by the British the same day. In the Evelyn letters he is called "little Gould."

ADDENDUM. Just as the plates of this book are about to be cast I have stumbled on the statement by Edward Everett ("Oration Delivered at Concord", 1825, Appendix D) that the Reverend Edward Brooks of Medford "is said to have preserved the life of Lieut. Gould of the 18th regiment, who was made prisoner at Concord Bridge." But as Thaxter ascribes the capture of Percy's supply train, in Menotomy, to Brooks (Everett discredits this), and as the minister is not likely to have been at the Bridge on the same morning, we seem to have again a mixture of traditions. I am inclined to suppose that since both Brooks and Gould seem to have been in Menotomy at about the same time, Brooks was the hero of the rescue, in that town.

XXIV

THE British retreat from the Bridge was in complete disorder, the wounded taking care of themselves. Amos Barrett wrote, "Their was 8 or 10 that was wounded and a Runing and Hobbling about Lucking [looking] back to see if we was after them." There is a traditional story of their hasty flight past the house of Elisha Jones; the little girl of four, who saw it, remembered it into old age.

Some of the veterans, carrying from the field their still loaded muskets, must have been savage at the defeat. It is said that Jones pointed his gun out of an upper window, but that his wife, clinging to him, persuaded him not to fire. Jones laid his gun away. He could not resist, however, going to his shed door, and standing and looking triumphantly at the fugitives. One of them, welcoming a chance at a Yankee, fired at Jones as he went by. The hasty shot pierced the wall about a yard from Jones's head, and its mark still gives the popular name to Concord's House with the Bullet-Hole.[1]

Now as the British troops retreated there appeared from Concord, marching to the support of the light infantry, the head of a little column of grenadiers. They were coming in answer to Laurie's appeal for help, and Barker tells why they were late. "The Coll. [Smith] order'd 2 or 3 Compys. but put himself at their head by which means stopt 'em from being time enough, for being a very fat heavy Man he wou'd not have reached the Bridge in half an hour tho' it was not half a mile to it."

Between the grenadiers and the pursuing provincials

[1] J. S. Keyes, "The Story of an Old House", p. 12.

there might now have been another skirmish. Here again Barker gives details.

"The Grenadiers met 'em [the fugitives] in the road and then advanced to meet the Rebels who had got this side the Bridge and on a good height, but seeing the manœuvre they thought proper to retire again over the Bridge."

The American account is different. Pursuing the British across the bridge, they did not follow them, says Amos Barrett. Instead of turning the corner toward the town, the provincials went forward into the field, up the hill behind Elisha Jones's house, and posted themselves behind a wall in view of the road, obeying the American instinct to take cover when they could. But not all of the militia followed on. A good number of them retreated again across the stream, and taking up the bodies of Davis and Hosmer, carried them to the Buttrick farm. And this is good soldiering among green troops, when many go on a duty for which a few would be enough. It would seem, to judge by Barker's statement, that so many retired that the whole were judged to have retreated.

Yet some two hundred, says Amos Barrett, remained upon the hill, lying behind the wall. Barrett thought there were in the road below the "Hull boddy" of the grenadiers. "When they got ny [nigh] anuff mager Buttrick said He wood give the word fire but they Did not come quite so near as he exspected before tha halted the commanding offerser ordered the hull Battalion to halt and offersers to the frunt march the offersers then marched to the front thair we Lay behind the wall about 200 of us with our guns Cock^{d}. exspecting everey minnit to have the word fire our orders was if we fir^{d}. to fire 2 or

3 times and then Retreat if we had fir[d]. I beleave we could kild all most every offerser thair was in the front but we had no orders to fire and their want a gun fir[d]. they staid about 10 minnits and then marched back and we after them."

But not far after them. The grenadiers retired to the town; the provincials lay behind the ridge. Ripley, who in shorter form tells this same general story of the division of the Americans into two bodies, now allows them breakfast. Young parson Thaxter took his meal with William Emerson.

The Americans needed more than breakfast. Almost as much demoralized by victory as by defeat, the scattered militia had deprived Buttrick of any advantages of unity and numbers, and had the grenadiers come nearer as he waited on the hill, he might well have hesitated, easily flanked as his position was, to open fire on them. Evidently he could not collect his force again for united action. So far as we know, the men that remained with him lay hidden behind the ridge, or straggled away for food and water. If Barrett or Buttrick had any plan, they may well have felt as Washington did in the months that followed, knowing the militia to be as unstable as sand.[1]

[1] See for this section Amos Barrett's letter, the depositions (1835) of Thorpe and Solomon Smith, Ripley, and Barker. That Thorpe and Smith, Acton men, were with Buttrick on the hill, leaving to others the care of the fallen Davis, speaks well for their soldierly qualities. The two agreed in 1835 that the distance from the men on the hill to the grenadiers in the road was forty rods or more, a range much too great for firelocks. The demoralization of the militia is not to be wondered at; but it gave Josiah Adams occasion to claim that it was the death of Davis that caused it. He asked what Buttrick did after the Fight. Amos Barrett gives a partial answer; but if Buttrick and James Barrett disappear from the further history of the day, their case was the same as that of every colonel, major, or captain that marched to the fighting, whether in Con-

cord or on the road to Boston, unless they contrived to get themselves injured. The most that can be claimed for the provincials after the Fight and until the British left Concord, is that they probably kept a watch upon the movements of the regulars.

It may be inquired why, if the late Lexington depositions have been thrown out of court, the writer accepts as a basis for this section the late letter of Amos Barrett (1825) and the depositions of 1835. The answer has already been partially given. Only those parts of the late Lexington depositions have been rejected that contradict contemporary testimony; the confirmatory and illustrative parts are surely as good history as those other recollections of old men which are the basis of much history—such as Joinville's recollections of the crusades and Saint Louis. Taken with salt, they are the best that we have. Now Amos Barrett's letter, confirmed in part by Ripley, Thorpe, and Smith, is not inherently improbable, and it picturesqueness should not bar its acceptance.

The reader will note that, in contrast to the diaries, Amos Barrett's letter approaches literature. It conveys sensations, and it shows us sights.

XXV

AT the time when the North Bridge lay deserted, some of the provincials having retreated to the Buttrick house with their dead, while others were on the hill on the Concord side, there happened an important incident of the day. The moment may have been when Smith was consulting with his officers in the road, in ignorance of the militia hiding on the hill, waiting for him to come nearer. At that time a boy, nearly grown, we may suppose, but not yet a man, crossed the bridge alone, meaning to join the provincials who lay waiting behind the wall. In his hand he carried an ax or hatchet.

Three British soldiers had been mortally wounded by the fire at the bridge, but apparently one of them survived long enough for his companions to carry him from the field. Dying on the road, or in the village, he was buried by his comrades near the present Courthouse, where the road turns into Concord Square.

Two men were left on the ground, one dead, the other apparently severely wounded. What he may have done when the boy approached, we do not know. He may have tried to rise. The boy may have felt frightened. At any rate, he struck the wounded soldier with his ax, and left him dying. It is scarcely to be supposed that the soldier threatened him, for the men who learned of the deed did not excuse it. "This act," testified Thomas Thorp years later, "was a matter of horror to us all." [1]

[1] Thomas Thorp testified in 1835 that when he crossed the bridge the man was "wounded and helpless. . . I saw him sitting up and wounded." His horror at the act is stated in the same paragraph.

In ignorant triumph, pe[illegible] boy went on, and left the battle field empty.

Now came to the [illegible]etachment of light infantry returning from [illegible]arm. It has been said that they had hea[illegible]g; but in 1835 Charles Handley testified th[illegible] at Mrs. Brown's tavern as these men returne[illegible] they stopped for drink, that he, a boy of thirte[illegible] heard the guns, but that they did not. They marched on in no haste.

Reaching the bridge, they were disturbed to find some of the planks out of place. Crossing it, they came upon the dead and dying men. If they had not before known of the firing, they knew it now, and were so alarmed that no one examined the man with the bloody head, though he was reported to Gage as still living. Ripley says [1] that they "ran with great speed" to join the main body. The story that they brought with them was that one of the men had been "scalped, his Head much mangled, and his ears cut off, tho not quite dead." [2]

The story was circulated among the troops. Some passed the report on unchanged; others at once exaggerated it. The number grew to several. Gouging was added to the other barbarities. The effect upon the men, in terrifying them and hardening their hearts, may be imagined. If later in the day the regulars committed any deeds hard to excuse, the feeling that caused them may be traced to this story.[3]

[1] Ripley apparently gets his information from his wife, for he says "Their conduct was observed by the Rev. Mr. Emerson and his family, who had witnessed the whole tragical scene from the windows of his house near the battle-grounds." Ripley married Emerson's widow. The return of the soldiers may have interrupted the breakfast with the Reverend Joseph Thaxter.

[2] Gage's "Circumstantial Account."

[3] Berniere, though he returned with Parsons, and expressed his sense of their

Gage used the tale promptly in his statement sent to the Governor of Connecticut, to offset charges brought against his troops. And here the wisdom of the Massachusetts politicians became mere shrewdness. They caused the two men who had buried the dead soldiers to testify "that neither of those persons were scalped, nor their ears cut off." The deposition was sent to England with the other testimony.

The stupidity of this performance was worse than that which persuaded the Lexington men to conceal the fact that they had returned the British fire. For this mistake Lexington alone suffered. But the scalping story attained at once the rank of an atrocity, to the damage of the American cause. Further, it was sure to persist, for there were plenty who could say that they had seen the mangled man.[1] So late as 1841 Adolphus, the British historian, stubbornly insisted "several were scalped, or had their ears cut off, by the Americans."

The correct tale was soon published. In Gordon's "Letter" of May seventeenth it was related as told to Gordon by Emerson, "with great concern for its having happened." It was repeated in Gordon's "History", which had a wide sale. Americans generally repudiated the deed, yet Ripley and Shattuck agreed to ignore it,

escape from the provincials, cannot have seen the dying man, and was perhaps on the other side of the column. Barker does not mention the episode. But Percy had an exaggerated account of the incident. Stedman says that "several" were scalped, and in the "Detail and Conduct of the American War", p. 9, gouging was added.

[1] See Donkin's "Military Collections", *footnote* in preface *p. iii.* "There was one soldier scalped and his ears cut off, (though not quite dead) at Concordbridge by these barbarians; two captains, who saw him wallowing in blood will prove this, should any rebel dare deny it." Donkin, writing in garrison in New York only a year later, doubtless knew the captains personally.

and deserved the scolding which they received from Josiah Adams.

Kindly narrators have sought to make the youth half-witted, but it was not so. The act was excused, said Solomon Smith in 1835, only by the excitement and inexperience of the perpetrator. It brought him remorse. In 1807 he told Charles Handley that his act had worried him very much, but that he thought he was doing right at the time. Hawthorne, getting the story from the poet Lowell, dressed it romantically, and wished to follow the subsequent career of the young man and observe how his soul was tortured by the blood stain, a thoroughly characteristic desire of the author of the "Scarlet Letter." [1]

Surviving his wound, mangled by an enemy, even deserted by the comrades who found him still alive, "the poor object," said Gordon, "lived an hour or two before he expired." It is a pitiful story. He lies to-day, an Unknown Soldier, where alien hands buried him. But yearly in the spring come British veterans to decorate his grave, and Americans fire a salute above him.

[1] See the preface to the "Mosses from an Old Manse." Hawthorne says that the young man was chopping wood at the Manse, but rightly realizes that such an act on such a day would scarcely be characteristic of a youth who would later go to follow the soldiers. Mrs. Chamberlin in her letter of 1888 concerning her grandfather William Emerson denies that the family slave was the culprit, apparently feeling sure that no one else would be at the Manse chopping wood. Against this story that the youth came from the Manse is Gordon's statement, here accepted, that the youth was crossing the bridge to join the pursuers, meaning that he was coming from the side opposite the Manse. (History, I, 311.)

XXVI

THE best that can be said of the American leaders, during the pause that followed the Fight, is that once more with Fabian wisdom they let time fight for them. Every hour increased their numbers, or brought the men from distant towns nearer to the line of the British retreat. The Sudbury men came into Concord; the Framingham men, known to De Berniere, were not far behind; the Woburn men were pressing up through Lexington, and the men of Billerica and Reading were approaching through Bedford.

But all this, so far as it concerned the Concord leaders, was passive; they did no active planning and prepared nothing. They let the detachment under Parsons cross the bridge and made no attempt to cut them off, though those hundred men were in their hands. Probably all that Barrett and his council wanted was to see the British abandon Concord, the hostage which they held. Possibly the provincials still adhered to their intention to march into the town if it were set on fire.

The thing that they could do apparently did not occur to them. On the line of the British retreat were narrow passages commanded by wooded hills, passages easily beset, easily blocked. A little work by axmen, and there would be abbatis in front and at the sides behind which the defenders would be safe for a considerable time. If three such strong places had been prepared between Concord and Lexington, to be forced only by the bayonet, Smith would never have rejoined Percy. The traps would have been quite as good against Percy, marching out from town.

That the men at Concord never thought of this may be excused by higher examples. The Committee of Safety, sitting then in council at Menotomy, never thought of it either. How little Heath, the one general officer who took the field that day, conceived and executed, will be seen later.

But if the Americans delayed and gained, Smith delayed and lost. Every minute that was valuable to the provincials was dangerous to him; if he believed in the "vast numbers" assembling that he reported to Gage, he should have bent all his energies toward starting for safety as soon as possible. Two responsibilities only could delay him. One was the men who were out at Colonel Barrett's, and whose safety was threatened by the cloud of militia that still hung on the hillside from which they had already once marched down to the attack. More numerous than Parsons' detachment of a hundred men, they could waylay and destroy them. But when Smith, as Barker records,[1] after meeting the fleeing defenders of the bridge marched back into Concord, he virtually left Parsons to his fate, not even trying to prevent the provincials from holding the bridge against him, or destroying it. De Berniere plainly recognized his escape. "They let Capt. Parsons with his three companies return, and never attacked us; they had taken up some of the planks of the bridge,[2] but we got over; had they destroyed it we were most certainly all lost; however, we joined the main body."

Smith's other concern was of course his wounded. Gould, a moneyed man, was established in a chaise and started in advance for Boston, very likely with directions

[1] "The whole then went into Concord drew up in the Town and waited for the 3 Companies that were gone on, which arrived in about an hour."

[2] Of course this was done by Laurie's men, not the provincials.

to hurry on the reinforcements. Possibly it was of him that the story was told that he left his watch at Doctor Minott's;[1] it was returned by an old black servant, who calling out "Hollo, sir, you have left your watch," restored it to him without expectation of reward. Or perhaps the story refers to poor Lieutenant Hull, the fair-haired boy who stoically endured his mortal wound.[2] It is not known whether Smith had a surgeon with him; if not, the dressing of the wounds must all have been done by Americans, who for a time would have their hands full. Smith would have done well to leave his wounded in the care of men of his own race, while he took the rest to safety.

It is, of course, possible that he lingered in the hope of reinforcements. His movements at any rate were puzzling to the Concord minister, who wrote "Y^e^ Enemy by y^r^ Marches & counter Marches discov^d^ gt [great] Feekelness and Inconstancy of Mind, sometimes advancing sometimes returning to y^r^ former Posts, till at Lenth they quitted y^e^ Town, & retreated by y^e^ Wa [y] yy [they] came."

According to a fair calculation, the British had been in the town a full four hours, if not more. The diary of David Brown, a captain at the Bridge, says that the "squirmish" took place "between nine and ten of the clock in the forenoon."[3] Shattuck puts the time between ten and eleven. De Berniere says the return march was about twelve, which is usually accepted. With his wounded in confiscated chaises, made comfortable with bedding, Smith left the town as he had entered it, the

[1] Shattuck's "History", p. 113.

[2] He was wounded again on the retreat, and taken prisoner. See for description of him waiting for his death, the journal of McClure, 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XVI, 155–158.

[3] Josiah Adams' "Address", p. 32, *footnote*.

grenadiers in the road, the light infantry flanking them on the ridge above.[1]

The mile to Meriam's Corner was passed without event, but at that point converged various forces. When the flankers descended from the ridge and joined the main body, marching east, the provincials who had been at the fight appeared, reinforced by the men of Sudbury, all hastening across the Great Meadows from the northwest, while at the same time approached from the north, down the old Bedford road, the minutemen of Reading, in whose ranks was one more of those inevitable ministers who were so involved in both the enacting and the writing of the history of the Nineteenth. Just at sunrise on that day, wakened by the news, this Edmund Foster hurried to his captain (afterward Governor Brooks) and asked if he were going to Concord, and when. The answer was "Immediately." With borrowed accoutrements this minister too came along. We owe the account of this new skirmish to him in part, but also to the story which his captain gave years afterward to that same General Sumner who reported Dorothy Quincy's inadequate tale of Lexington.

Behind the men of Reading was the Billerica company, and across the main road the men of East Sudbury were approaching from the south.[2] Nearest of all to the British was this Reading company, whose captain, then a doctor, had studied his tactics by the help of Pickering of Salem. With his textbooks in mind, remembering also the warning of his colonel, coming behind, not to go too far, Brooks

[1] Thaddeus Blood stated that there were flankers also in the meadows to the right of the road. Unless those meadows were much more overgrown than today, there would be no need of this.

[2] Ripley makes these two statements.

halted to make sure of his position. At first he saw only the British flankers, perhaps a hundred of them, on the ridge, and mistook their uniform for that of a provincial company. His mistake was plain when the grenadiers came in sight on the main road, and the light infantry joined them. Making sure that he would not be outflanked, Brooks advanced to take cover at the buildings of the Meriam homestead, which stand there still. If his wisdom had been equalled by other captains, many lives would have been saved that day.

It will be remembered that at this point, Meriam's Corner, the ridge dies away. Foster was impressed with the bearing of the regulars. "The British marched down the hill with very slow, but steady step, without music, or a word spoken that could be heard. Silence reigned on both sides." The flankers rejoined the main column, and the whole marched on.

The visitor of to-day scarcely remarks that modern road-building here makes nothing of a brook that near the Corner crosses the road. But in those days the road was narrowed for a little bridge, after crossing which the rear guard, says the minister, turned and fired. By Brooks' account, the Americans fired first, aiming at the bridge when crowded with the regulars. Amos Barrett said in the abrupt ending of his narrative, "a grait many Lay dead and the Road was bloddy."[1]

[1] The story of the fight at Meriam's Corner is briefly outlined in most of the stories of the day. The accounts by Brooks and Foster are again the recollections of old men; Foster's letter, quoted in large part by Ripley (the missing section would be welcome!) is of 1825; and Brooks' story (to be found in Sumner's "History of East Boston", *footnote* on pages 355 and 356) is of approximately the same date. They agree closely, especially in regard to the distance of the troops from the minutemen, twenty rods (or possibly thirty, Brooks conceded). The British were therefore within musket range.

XXVII

THE firing at Meriam's Corner quickly developed into a running fight. The takers of the bridge closed in, the men of Reading, Billerica, and East Sudbury as well. As others appeared from right and left, the rear-guard action was extended to the sides of the column. Before the British were well into Lincoln, through a corner of which the road runs, the men of Framingham from the south, and the men of Woburn from the east, were taking part.

The American stories of the retreat from Concord to Lexington are largely traditional. Amos Barrett's letter is ended. Foster's letter gives anecdotes difficult to localize. Ripley and Shattuck say little. A systematic account of the first five miles of retreat is impossible to construct.

But it is plain that the fighting on the part of the provincials was almost entirely carried on by individuals without direction or order. It is said [1] that the Framingham captains held their men together under some kind of supervision; if so, they did better than was done by other officers on that day. The fighting in general was conducted by each man for himself, firing always from cover, loading when hidden, then running forward across the fields to intercept the British at another place of vantage.

The present broad highway, with its few curves and easy grades, gives little idea of the one of 1775. The narrow road dropped at times into small ravines which were commanded by the hillsides above. At least two

[1] Temple's "History of Framingham."

large sections of the route bent to the northward, rejoining the modern road after a detour. At one of these northerly turns, with "great trees on the west, and high bushes on the east", says Ripley, the provincials attacked the British and held them stiffly. By the help of their flankers the British fought their way through, and a little later the flankers caught some Bedford men who, less wise than Brooks, thought themselves safe behind a barn. Their captain, Wilson, was killed. It was almost the first case of those killings by the British flankers which showed the inexperience of the provincials in warfare; there were many who, thinking themselves in a safe position to fire on the British column in front, had the "surprise and mortification" of being shot in the back.[1]

But the British had the worst of it. This kind of warfare, new to them and exactly fitting the ground, was not only deadly but demoralizing. There were no marks to shoot at. The appearance of a head and arm from behind a tree or wall would be followed by a shot; the man would vanish, in a minute to be seen flitting to another cover. This was no kind of warfare for men who had been taught to stand up and fire in the open, with adversaries who would do the same. Strange as it appears to Americans who have the tradition of Indian fighting almost in their blood, and who have just seen the greatest war in history fought largely on American principles,[2] not only the British private but even the British officer was bewildered and indignant, thinking the method of attack dishonorable and murderous. It

[1] W. D. Howells, "Three Villages: Lexington."

[2] See in the appendix of Thomas G. Frothingham's "Guide to the Military History of the World War", his study of the development of American ideas and methods in infantry warfare.

is scarcely to be wondered at that they could not hold their own, and that the retreat became disorderly.

At length, at a place where the road makes a third sharp turn to the left, now marked by a tablet under a little rocky bluff,[1] Smith and Pitcairn made the effort to reform their ranks. On the bluff they posted a rear guard, and farther on, where the road winds up Fiske Hill, the two mounted officers endeavored to get their men into some kind of order. Edmund Foster was an eye-witness of the result. "The enemy were then rising and passing over Fiske's hill. An officer, mounted on an elegant horse, and with a drawn sword in his hand, was riding backwards and forwards, commanding and urging on the British troops. A number of Americans behind a pile of rails, raised their guns and fired with deadly effect. The officer fell, and the horse took fright, leaped the wall, and ran directly towards those who had killed his rider."

Here we have our last glimpse of Pitcairn on the Nineteenth, for it was he whose horse threw him and ran away. Not killed or even wounded, he went the rest of the way on foot. The horse was caught by the Americans, and identified by Pitcairn's pistols, which were carried through the rest of the war by Israel Putnam, and are now in the collection of the Lexington Historical Society. At this place, and perhaps by this same fire, Smith was also wounded.[2] When presently the rear guard was driven in, the attempt to rally the troops was abandoned, and the disorderly retreat continued.[3]

[1] It is to be hoped that the disfigurement of the present advertising sign will some day be removed.

[2] Apart from the facts given in Foster's letter, the statements here are from Hudson's "History of the Town of Lexington", I, 167.

[3] The story of the death of James Hayward is localized near this fight, on the

It is satisfactory to believe that here, within the bounds of Lexington, among those who defeated the attempt to rally the British, were the men of that town. Scattered in the morning, a high proportion of their number killed or wounded, it would not have been surprising if they had not come again to the fight. But meeting again under their captain, they marched down the Concord road to take their revenge. Before the afternoon was out, one of them, wounded in the morning, had been killed. The afternoon fight of the Lexington men has been obscured by the story of the morning, but it is the more heroic.

The British were nearly desperate. Their diarists make no concealment of the situation. Says Barker:

> The Country was an amazing strong one, full of Hills, Woods, stone Walls, &c., which the Rebels did not fail to take advantage of, for they were all lined with People who kept an incessant fire upon us, as we did too upon them but not with the same advantage, for they were so concealed there was hardly any seeing them: in this way we marched between 9 and 10 miles,[1] their numbers

easterly side of Fiske hill, where a tablet stands. Good history, it appears first in print in the *Essex Gazette* of April 25, copied literally in the *Massachusetts Spy* of May 5. "Mr. James Howard and one of the Regulars discharged their pieces at the same instant, and each killed the other." Told with more and more circumstance in later times, the story at length became romance in the hands of James Trask Woodbury, arguing before the legislature for a grant for the Acton monument. (See Speech by James Trask Woodbury, Boston, 1851, p. 38. The dialogue between father and son is quite artificial.) There was no necessity to so dress the story up, for in its essential features it is stirring enough. Going to a well for water, Hayward met a regular coming from the house. The regular said, "You are a dead man!" Haywood answered, "And so are you!" They fired at the same moment; the soldier was killed and Hayward mortally wounded, the soldier's ball passing through his powder horn and driving splinters into his side.

[1] The distance is only about five miles. In the next quotation Berniere similarly exaggerates the number of the provincials.

increasing from all parts, while ours was reducing from deaths, wounds, and fatigue, and we were totally surrounded with such an incessant fire as it's impossible to conceive, our ammunition was likewise near expended.

De Berniere paints a condition that was even worse:

All the hills on each side of us were covered with rebels —there could not be less than 5000; so that they kept the road always lined and a very hot fire on us without intermission; we at first kept our order and returned their fire as hot as we received it, but when we arrived within a mile of Lexington, our ammunition began to fail, and the light companies were so fatigued with flanking they were scarce able to act, and a great number of wounded scarce able to get forward, made a great confusion; Col. Smith (our commanding officer) had received a wound through his leg, a number of officers were also wounded, so that we began to run rather than retreat in order—the whole behaved with amazing bravery, but little order; we attempted to stop the men and form them two deep, but to no purpose, the confusion increased rather than lessened: At last, after we got through Lexington, the officers got to the front and presented their bayonets, and told the men that if they advanced they should die: Upon this they began to form under a very heavy fire.

The humiliation of it must have cut deep into those who, on this flight, recognized Lexington green. Here, where in the pride of their power that morning they had scattered the provincials, they were now driven before them. If fear blinded the enlisted men to that disgrace, surely many an officer felt the hurt to his pride as he saw where he was.

It was a desperate case. The men had lost their morale, and if for a while the officers had succeeded in regaining their ascendancy, they could not have kept it. Just a

few cartridges were left in the pouches, and when they were gone, what could the flower of Gage's army do against an enemy who, refusing to come and be bayoneted, soon would be taking deadlier aim from closer range? Three miles, even a mile more, and the sullen men would be throwing down their useless guns, the shamed officers waiting for homespun captains to come and claim the surrender of their swords.

Smith and Pitcairn, longing for relief from Boston, must have been almost without hope.

XXVIII

FORTUNATELY for Smith, help was approaching, coming at this late hour in response to his appeal sent to Boston very early in the morning.[1]

Before he went to bed on the eighteenth, Gage left orders for the first brigade to parade at four o'clock the next morning. Percy was its brigadier; very likely the two had been in consultation over the order just before Percy overheard the provincials on the Common. Gage gave his instructions and went to bed; perhaps he was there when Smith's letter was delivered, early the next morning, and from his comfortable rest sent orders to Percy to march. For it does not appear that he was disturbed by the late departure of the brigade, nor that he appeared in person to hasten its march.

The blunders that caused the nearly disastrous delay of the relieving expedition are detailed in a letter of the times.[2]

> The general ordered the first brigade under arms at four in the morning; these orders the evening before were carried to the brigade major's; he was not at home; the orders were left; no enquiry was made after him; he came home late; his servant forgot to tell him there was a letter on his table; four o'clock came; no brigade appeared; at five o'clock an express from Smith desiring a reinforcement produced an enquiry; the above

[1] For the route of Percy's brigade, see the map on the inside of the back cover of this volume.

[2] Letter of July 5, 1775, in "Detail and Conduct of the American War", London, 1780 (3d edition), p. 10. A corroboration of this is to be found in Mackenzie's diary (for which see page 235, *footnote*), though Mackenzie did not know all the story.

discovery was made; at six o'clock part of the brigade got on the parade; there they waited expecting the marines; at seven no marines appearing, another enquiry commenced; they said they had received no orders; it was asserted they had; in the altercation it came out that the order had been addressed to Major Pitcairn who commanded the marines and left at his quarters, though the gentleman concerned in the business ought to have recollected that Pitcairn had been dispatched the evening before with the grenadiers and light infantry under Lieut. Col. Smith. This double mistake lost us from four till nine O'clock, the time we marched off to support Col. Smith.

This catalogue of mistakes is a reminder that even regular troops often strongly resemble a militia, and makes us suspect that the organization and discipline of Gage's army needed improving. How Percy, who should have been afoot at four, submitted to so long a delay is difficult to see. Boston, where the news of Smith's expedition had not at first been told, probably was early excited to see that with the troops there was, for the first time, artillery. With the brigade were two light fieldpieces, which proved to be a very important part of the equipment. But before Percy's expedition started the news of the fighting was whispered in the town,[1] and the excitement must have been tinged with fear and anger. A picture of the streets survives in the recollections of Harrison Gray Otis, then a schoolboy of nine years.

On the 19th of April, 1775, I went to school for the last time. In the morning, about seven, Percy's brigade was drawn up, extending from Scollay's buildings, through

[1] The news came to Roxbury, according to Gordon's "Letter", between eight and nine. It cannot have taken long to seep into Boston. John Andrews puts the arrival of the news in Boston at about eight. It may have come via Charlestown.

Tremont Street, and nearly to the bottom of the Mall, preparing to take up their march for Lexington. A corporal came up to me as I was going to school, and turned me off, to pass down Court Street; which I did, and came up School Street to the schoolhouse. It may well be imagined that great agitation prevailed, the British line being drawn up a few yards only from the school-house door. As I entered the door, I heard the announcement of *deponite libros*, and ran home for fear of the Regulars.[1]

There is a tradition that the prophetic schoolmaster, having heard the rumors of fighting, said, "War's begun and school's done." He locked the door and went quietly away to join his company—while for yet another two hours the brigade waited for the marines, the irresponsibles chatting and indifferent, but handsome Percy fretting on his horse. When at last the brigade started, it must have made a gallant show with its scarlet and white, and its many-colored facings. The derisive music from all its drums and fifes, so we are told, was "Yankee Doodle." [2]

[1] This is from a letter written in Otis' age to Edward Everett Hale, and printed "for the first time" in Hale's "One Hundred Years Ago." Hale was mistaken as to the first printing, which appears to be in the *Boston Advertiser*, April 19, 1858.—Scollay's buildings were in present Scollay Square, and the Mall was on the Common.

[2] Every company in those days had its own drummer and fifer, and its flag as well. The use of "Yankee Doodle" as a taunt to the Americans had been common. Andrews wrote in regard to the interruption of the provincial fast, in March, that near a meetinghouse a "parcell of drums and fifes" "play'd and beat Yanky Doodle the whole forenoon service time, to the great interruption of the congregation."

The first brigade consisted of the 4th, 23d, and 47th regiments, and the marines. The grenadiers and light infantry companies having been taken to form the detachment, Percy's command consisted of "eight companies of the 4th, the same number of the 23d, 47th and Marines." (Gage to Dartmouth, Bancroft transcripts.)

Percy marched out over the Neck, through Roxbury, and along the miles of curving road that led to the bridge over the Charles.[1] It was country then where to-day

That Percy's brigade should play this tune gave too good an opportunity for ridicule, and it was speedily turned against him. Here it is interesting to trace the growth of the Chevy Chase story. A footnote in Force's "American Archives" (IV, II, 438) appended to the account of the day in the *Massachusetts Spy* printed May 5, tells that a British officer, asked how he liked "Yankee Doodle" now, answered, "Damn them, they made us dance it till we were tired." But the footnote does not appear in the original newspaper. That would put the earliest notice of the episode in John Warren's "Diary": "They intrenched for the Night upon Bunker Hill after having danced the tune of Yankee Doodle, which was played by the Brigade when they went up." In Gordon's "Letter" the story appears in the same simple form.

It was the London wits that connected the episode with the Chevy Chase ballad. Horace Walpole was the first, in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, June 5, 1775. (Letters to Mann, concluding series, II, 324.) Allusion is also made in Almon's "Remembrancer" for the same year, p. 88. The story was so good that Gordon could not resist it, and in his "History" (I, 312) he adopted it complete, in the final form of the Roxbury boy who laughed so hard at the fifers that Percy asked him the reason. "To think how you will dance by and by to Chevy Chase." And the reference is supposed to have haunted Percy's mind all day.

This is not even tradition: it is legend. But the historic parallel is too good to be forgotten.

"To drive the deer with hound and horne
Erle Percy took his way.
The child may rue that is unborne
The hunting of that day!"

[1] In "The Record of Streets, Alleys, Places, etc., in the City of Boston" (published by the city in 1910) Percy's route, and the bridge he crossed, are given as follows: "Old Road to Roxbury, Bri; the earliest road from Boston, and over the route now designated by the names of Washington street (over the 'neck'), Roxbury street, Columbus avenue, Tremont street, Huntington avenue (in Roxbury) Washington street (by the 'Punch Bowl') and Harvard street (in Brookline), Harvard avenue, Cambridge and North Harvard streets (in Brighton) to the ferry (established in 1635) and Boylston street (in Cambridge) to the college (the only road to the college). An order 'in respect of making a sufficient path from the south side of Charles river, from Cambridge to Roxberie, etc,' was passed by the town of Cambridge in 1638; Earl Percy passed over this road on his way to Lexington with the British troops in 1775" (pp. 348–349). The bridge is described as: "North Harvard Street bridge, Bri. and Camb, 1866;

the flats are filled; where were marshes or farms are now all houses, streets, or parks. At the river the planks of the bridge had been taken up; but as they had been neatly piled on the Cambridge side, soldiers crossed on the stringers and replaced enough of the planks for the brigade and fieldpieces to cross. Leaving his supply train to complete the laying of the planks, Percy pressed on.[1]

The supply train of one or two wagons, thus delayed, was the earliest of all to come to disaster. It was captured in Menotomy. The story is variously told: that the "old men of Menotomy", headed either by one Mr. Payson, a previously pacifistic minister of Chelsea, or else by a mulatto, waylaid the train and commanded it to halt. The train driving on, the horses and some of the men were killed. The remainder of the men, running away, are said to have delivered themselves to an old woman, Mother Batherick, who was digging dandelions.[2]

Percy marched on to Cambridge, through a deserted

from North Harvard street in Brighton, across Charles river to Boylston street in Cambridge; probably completed before March 23, 1662, when it was ordered 'that the bridge be laid in oil and lead, etc.'; it was larger than any that had ever been erected in the colony, and from the first it was called the 'Great Bridge'" (p. 342). This is the present Stadium Bridge, so called. Percy's further route was presumably our modern Massachusetts Avenue, joining Smith's at Beech Street.

[1] The story is in various forms; this is taken from E E. Hale's article in the "Memorial History of Boston", III, 72. It is tradition, but the reason is always given for the separation of the supply train from the rest of the expedition.

[2] See McClure's diary, written shortly after: 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XVI, 158; also Colonial Society's Publications, VII, 27–30; and Smith's "West Cambridge in 1775", 27–30. Smith gives the name of the mulatto leader as David Lamson. Thaxter in his "Letter" of 1824 says that the minister who organized the party was "the Rev. Edward Brooks, who lived at Medford." See Edward Everett's Concord Oration, Appendix D.

country.[1] According to an anecdote,[2] when his attention was drawn to the empty houses, he predicted that the troops would be fired on from them on their return. Finding no one of whom he could ask questions,[3] he could get no news of the detachment till he had passed Menotomy, when he was told that they were retiring under fire. Pressing on, he began to hear the firing, and next met the wounded Lieutenant Gould, who gave him the news that the ammunition of the retreating detachment was almost exhausted. With much haste, now, Percy must have urged on his men.

There are few things more thrilling, in fiction or history,

[1] For a view of the exodus from Cambridge, see the letter of Madam Winthrop. Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, April 1875, p. 29.

[2] This anecdote is in a footnote in Stedman's "American War", I, 132. It has been said that Stedman was with Percy, but while he is singularly accurate in regard to Concord, where Percy did not go, he makes a topographical error in regard to Percy's "passing the river" on his return.

[3] For these statements see Stedman, and also Percy's reports to Gage (one a rough draft) contained in the Percy "Letters", pp. 49–51. There is a tradition that at Cambridge Percy was directed on his way by a tutor at the college, who for innocently putting him on the right road was sent to Coventry by his neighbors. But as there is no support for this in Percy's "there was not the appearance of a single inhabitant", and as the story is also told as of Percy's retreat, it does not seem credible. On the way out Percy would not depend on casual guides, and his officers knew the way to a number of the taverns. On the way back he would have the services of Smith's guides.

It is difficult to see how the wounded Gould could have given Percy the news of the running fight, supposing him to have started from Concord in advance of the detachment, unless he was delayed on the road. According to the draft of Percy's report to Gage, Gould was only a quarter-hour in advance of Smith. It is said that Gould was captured at Mill Street, Menotomy. ("West Cambridge in 1775", p. 31.)

In the account of the retreat I have used Percy's reports and letters in "Letters of Hugh, Earl Percy", and shall use them without further reference to the little book, they are all between pages 49 and 55; I shall do likewise with the diary of Lieutenant Mackenzie of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, in Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, March, 1890, pp. 391*ff*.

than a rescue. Even the writers of the dry reports and diaries remembered the sound of the shooting as they marched up on it. Lieutenant Mackenzie of the 23d, the serious and methodical young man whose journal tells us most about this part of the day, wrote, "we heard the firing plainer and more frequent." The Pope MS. says, "for a considerable time before we joined them, we heard a very hot fire." Every soldier in the ranks must have felt the excitement as he quickened his step, with that broken hammering sounding in his ears. One thinks of Percy as close behind the advance guard, straining his eyes for the first sign of redcoats in the road.

Smith too may have been in his van. What was the first sound of rescue that he heard? One can imagine the harassed leader as he abruptly gave ear—

> "Turned sideways, listening, like a man who hears
> His brother's trumpet sounding though the wood
> Of his foes' lances!"

The men caught the news. Safety lay close ahead! Pressing on, "they shouted repeatedly", wrote Mackenzie, "and the firing ceased for a short time."

AMOS DOOLITTLE'S FOURTH PLATE.

"A View of the South Part of Lexington."

Showing the meeting of Smith and Percy, the minute-men firing on their troops, and the burning buildings.

XXIX

AS Percy entered Lexington he must have noticed, with a soldier's eye, that he was passing heights suitable for defence, for when the advance guards met he gave orders for the main body of the brigade to take possession of two low hills. Toward the shelter of the lines thus spread to receive them the weary detachment hastened. A little before three o'clock they were in safety. "I had the happiness," wrote Percy the next day, "of saving them from inevitable destruction." The statement is literally true.

Percy skilfully posted his cannon where they could command the approach from Concord; one low hill, since levelled, overlooked Lexington church, near which appeared the only group of rebels visible in the landscape. These must have been that knot of open pursuers of the rear guard which from first to last of the pursuit took no cover but came openly on, safe from musket fire, gathering up as prisoners the stragglers and wounded that they found. Among them at this moment was Loammi Baldwin, leader of the Woburn men who that morning had "turned out extraordinary"; he was coming, he says in his journal,[1] "with a prisoner before me, when the cannon began to play, the balls flew near me, I judged not more than 2 yards off." Baldwin took shelter, with others of the scattering group, behind the nearest cover. This being the meetinghouse, the next ball crashed through it, and the Yankees scattered again.

Near Mackenzie, in the front line of Percy's troops, must have been the writer of the Pope MS., for the two

[1] D. Hamilton Hurd's "History of Middlesex County", I, 447.

speak of the same things: the scattering of the rebels, and their taking refuge behind a swamp. According to the latter writer, the rescuers showed here at Lexington no better discipline than the light infantry in the morning. "Revenge had so fully possessed the breasts of the Soldiers, that the Battalions broke, regardless of every order, to pursue the affrighted runaways.—They were however formed again,—tho' with some difficulty, and it would have been scarcely possible, but for a morass, which lay between us, and the Enemy." The writer had scarcely yet taken the measure of his opponents. Mackenzie saw more clearly. "As there was a piece of open morassy ground in front of the left of our Regiment, it would have been difficult to have passed it under the fire of the Rebels from behind the trees and walls on the other side." Nothing could have better suited the provincials than to have those battalions scatter in pursuit: perfectly mobile, they could have taken their pursuers one by one. But Percy's line in general held, and the protection of the detachment was maintained.

Those poor devils had no thought of pursuing their hunters. Stedman, the British historian, drew a pathetic picture of the grenadiers and light infantry, "so much exhausted with fatigue, that they were obliged to lie down for rest on the ground, their tongues hanging out of their mouths, like those of dogs after a chase." The last is a touch beyond; there is no such resemblance, even at such a crisis, between *canis* and *homo:* only strangling brings protrusion of the human tongue. But we can well believe in the exhaustion of the detachment. Since early morning they had marched, some of them twenty, some twenty-five miles; all that time they had been on duty, without rest and with very little food. The last

five miles they had marched at top speed, harried, anxious, angry, perhaps wounded. It was fortunate for them that Munroe's tavern was within the circuit of Percy's lines. The half-hour's rest which Percy allowed them must have seemed too short.

It is most likely that during the rest, among the rescuers passed the story of the day's adventures, and particularly the tale of the scalping at the bridge. Percy had this with exaggerations, believed it, and so did probably his officers and men. Yet their abhorrence of the news was in some cases scarcely more deep and heartfelt than their condemnation of the provincials' method of fighting from cover, which some of them held to be treacherous, murderous, barbaric in the extreme.[1]

But little time was given for rest, or for the exchange of news. In less than an hour Percy gave the order to march.[2]

[1] For the extreme, old-style opinion on this point, though uttered by one who believed himself an expert in "partisan" warfare, see the "Military Collections" of Major Donkin. Copies of this are very rare. There is one in the Harvard Library.

[2] It is not easy to state just what ground Percy's lines covered, nor what was their disposition. Stedman speaks of a square, but it is difficult to believe that he was on the ground. Mackenzie implies that the troops were in a line, but as both he and Percy state that the rebels tried to outflank them, there must have been some shifting of the line to meet them. At any rate, the tavern was within the protection of the brigade.

Doolittle's fourth print does not help here. He shows the meeting of the advance guards, with Smith and Percy at the front.

A word ought to be said as to Mackenzie's value for reference. He is a good soldier, observant, and recording the time of each manœuver. His account is matter-of-fact, and while thorough, is quite stoical and uncomplaining. Barker, after finishing his relation, unburdens his fretful soul. Mackenzie, after a word of praise for Percy, busies himself with statistics. He is a little dry, inelastic, and shows too much of the textbook and drillground when he regrets the poor formation at Lexington. "We were ordered to form the Line, which was immediately done by extending on each side of the road, but by reason of the Stone-

walls and other obstructions, it was not formed in so regular a manner as it should have been." The remark is almost hopelessly formal, and one wonders if Mackenzie ever came to absorb Franklin's suggestion that there was value to both sides of a stone wall. (This is found in Austin's "Life of Gerry", 1, 72, *footnote*.)

Mackenzie says that the line was formed "at half after 2", and that orders for marching were received "about 1/4 past 3." Percy makes no statement.

XXX

LORD PERCY had one good quality of a soldier, for he could change his mind. Perhaps he remained of the same opinion as to the artful and designing villainy of the rebels, but one idea that he had been led into, that they were cowards, he unhesitatingly abandoned. He may have found amusement in letting his fifes play "Yankee Doodle", and watching the faces of the Whigs who listened as he marched out of Boston. He may have doubted Gould's story that Smith was being driven by the provincials. But when he saw the hurrying van of that broken force he admitted once and for all the valor of the men who could keep British grenadiers in hot retreat.

Very likely he did not look beyond the concrete fact. He could not be expected to understand that here was the arising of a new martial nation, fighting according to its own peculiar genius. He could not see that nation taking the despised ditty to be its own cherished tune, nor realize that that people would in a few years be winning campaigns from British generals by its own methods. In his situation he might not take a view detached enough to perceive that what the Americans now needed was leadership. Yet he may have been wise enough to pray that on that day leadership might still be lacking.

Percy was no raw soldier. Thirty-three years of age, he had served in the continental wars, and knew the science of that parade-ground school which still dominated all European tactics. The more to his credit, then, that with only a cloud of skirmishers about him, he knew himself to be in a danger where only the dogged following

of a single policy could save his men. To rest the tired detachment, and then with flankers out to force his way back to Boston, was the best that he could do.[1] Every delay was dangerous, and there was no help from Gage. For there in Lexington was more than a third of Gage's little army.

Percy rigidly adhered to the necessary plan. "No part of the brigade was ordered to advance," wrote Mackenzie, who with less insight seems to have expected an effort to punish the provincials. As the Yankees, always under cover, crept near and sniped his men, Percy took care to destroy their best protection, and ordered the throwing down of much stone wall, and the burning of three near-by buildings.

This, with the cannonading of the church, was long regarded with abhorrence by American historians, as well as by orators at the many anniversaries which have been celebrated on our historic ground. It is a testimony of our underlying good sense that there is still in Massachusetts a not unkindly feeling toward the English earl, even though he prevented our complete triumph.

Nor in spite of all that has been said of the conduct of Percy's troops on the retreat, is there a soldier of to-day who would deny him the right that he unhesitatingly took, to order his men into every house from which the column was fired on, when woe to the man of whatever age that was found within the walls. When old men were fighting against the regulars, suspicion lay heavily against every white head found within range;[2] and when time was desperately short, suspicion was condemnation. Let the

[1] It was said that Percy had meant to intrench in Cambridge. See "Narrative and Critical History of America", VI, 124.

[2] When the young men powdered their hair, discrimination would be difficult.

reader of our old histories, and the patriotic sympathizer with the heroic defenders of the rights of a free people, remember that the regulars were fighting for their lives, that many of them had in their hearts the terror of the scalping knife, and that in hot blood they could not pause for gentle methods. There are brutes, too, in every army. The time to check the deviltry of war is not when weapons have been fleshed and the demons in men have been unchained, but when preventive wisdom still may be heard.

As soon as he felt it possible to get the tired detachment again upon its legs, and doubtless too soon for many of them, Percy ordered the retreat. With the detachment in front, and the Royal Welsh Fusileers in the rear,[1] at about quarter past three the fifteen hundred men formed in column and began their march.[2] However defiant was the most reckless man there, the men of sense may well have wondered what now was to happen.

For this did not depend entirely upon themselves. It is true that they had been greatly strengthened. Apart from the fresh troops, they had a leader who could keep his head; and the new regiments were officered by men who within a month had conducted one long practice march with the rank and file. Moreover, as we shall see, a new factor had entered, the artillery. Percy's field-pieces during the halt had reduced the Americans to comparative silence. The cannon were to maintain their influence in the march that followed. Evidently the British were far stronger than before.

[1] The Royal Welsh were the 23d Regiment.

[2] In adopting Mackenzie's figures I accept a lower estimate than common, which would put the total some hundreds higher. Heath said the total was from 1500 to 2000. The diarists generally put the numbers lower than would be expected; for example, the Pope MS. puts the brigade at "about 700." About 1800 has been the common estimate.

The Americans needed therefore some factor to offset British reinforcements, British cannon, and British leadership. American reinforcements were sure to come. Cannon were not to be had: the sole idea, until now, had been to hide them from confiscation, and not a single company of provincial matrosses was ready for the field. There were no new British tactics for the Americans to meet; the regulars had gained most in morale, and American morale could scarcely be bettered. What was needed was generalship to break down the stubborn British determination to drive forward.

Of the American generals, Artemas Ward, the senior, was sick that day in Shrewsbury. Preble had resigned his office. Pomeroy and Thomas were not in evidence. There remained only Heath, and he was on the field. Wakened at daybreak, he went to meet with the Committee of Safety, whose record for the day contains only a clerk's copy of an order of the preceding day. The actual work of the committee during the morning seems to have been sending out the news to the farther towns and the other colonies. The speed with which the call spread, the excitement and determination with which it was received and passed on, make in themselves an interesting story.

The committee is believed to have met at Menotomy, and it would be interesting to know how its members kept clear of Percy's column. Joseph Warren was present, for on the news of the firing at Lexington, which probably came to him more directly and truthfully than to Gage, he had left Boston by way of Charlestown ferry. He said to a friend, "They have begun it,—that either party can do; and we'll end it,—that only one can do." Riding toward Menotomy in Percy's rear, he fell in with British

stragglers, as told by a diary of the time. "Two soldiers, going to Lexington, tried to steal Watson's horse, at Watson's corner; the old man, with his cat and hat, pulling one way, and the soldiers the other. Dr. Warren rode up, and helped drive them off. Tried to pass Percy's column; stopped by bayonets. Two British officers rode up to Dr. Warren, in the rear of the British, inquiring 'Where are the troops?' The doctor did not know. They were greatly alarmed." [1] The diarist turned back, but Warren went on. How long the committee sat when it finally assembled, is not known. But apparently it left all the fighting to the men on the ground.

Leaving this meeting, Heath tried to gain the road ahead of Percy's column, and for the purpose took a detour through Watertown. Here he was appealed to by the militia, who asked for orders. With forethought, Heath sent them down to Cambridge bridge, with orders "to take up the planks, barricade the south end of the bridge, and there to take post", in order to "impede" Percy's retreat.[2] The words do not read as if he expected to stop the British.

Continuing his detour to Lexington, Heath was joined by Warren, and apparently the two remained together.[3] At Lexington Heath assisted in "forming a regiment, which had been broken by the shot from the British field-pieces (for the discharge of these, together with the flames and smoke of several buildings . . . opened a new and more terrific scene)." It seems strange that in that

[1] Frothingham's "Life of Warren", p. 457.

[2] General Heath's "Memoirs", p. 14 (p. 21 in reprint of 1904).

[3] "From this time Warren, as chairman of the committee in Boston, kept near Heath, for counsel if need be." Justin Winsor in "Narrative and Critical History of America", VI, 125. The statement is conjectural, though the conjecture may be a good one. Heath says merely that Warren "kept with him."

kind of fighting an American regiment should have kept together long enough to be broken by the cannon, and that Heath should have assisted in forming it. What was his purpose? Was he to try to change the American tactics?

They needed to be bettered. For successful as they had been till now, the British flankers had caused too high a percentage of the American deaths, and again, the column had not suffered a single check.

Perhaps new tactics were impossible with men who instinctively fell out of ranks to begin individual firing at the regulars. Practically every company that came on the ground acted as did the Woburn men. Their captain wrote, "We . . . then concluded to scatter and make use of trees and walls for to defend us, and attack them."[1] But if the British flanking were to be stopped, other methods were necessary. Leaving the rear-guard action to take care of itself, but designing to protect the men who were attacking in flank, Heath should have kept in advance of the column. Holding together every regiment, battalion, or company that came on the field in a body, Heath should have ordered them to keep under cover, but to waylay and crush every flank guard that the British sent out. It was a certain way not only to protect his men, but also to break down the new British morale.

And next Heath should have sought every opportunity to block the road. That might not have been very simple. At dozens of places the shade trees of to-day could very soon, by means of a little ax-work, be made into tangles difficult for marching troops to pass. Such places probably were not frequent in 1775, but wherever trees stood

[1] Diary of Loammi Baldwin. Hurd's "History of Middlesex County", I, 448.

near the road they should have been felled across it. As military men know, the slightest check to a column is sufficient to delay the march for minutes.[1] Such frontal checks could have been made serious by means of fire, however slight, from the near-by stone walls—and the New England stone wall, little known as it is to people from other parts of the country, is frequent enough for such a purpose, and when well-built, that is double-built, impervious to bullets.

It all reads so nicely, on paper, that one is likely to forget the reasons against it: that Heath had no staff to help him give his orders, that the regiments had no field officers experienced in directing their men, and more important than anything else, that the men themselves were too raw.

Here too came in the influence of the cannon. Their effect upon the men is severely complained of by Joseph Thaxter, in his letter of 1824. Speaking of the cannon during Percy's wait at Lexington, he says "They fired them, but the balls went high over our heads. But no cannon ever did more execution; such stories of their effects [sic] had been spread by the Tories through our troops, that, from this time, more went back then [sic] pursued."

To some extent Thaxter was right, though it scarcely needed Tories to spread rumors. Against militia, cannon are always demoralizing. And it is true that from Lexington on, many turned back. We have other testimony to that effect. Gordon says in his "History", "There

[1] "No one without actual experience can possibly understand how the slightest obstacle in the road, a small brook or fallen tree, will disorganize a marching column." C. F. Morse in Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XLIV, 64.

were never more than about four hundred provincials together, attacking at one and the same time; and often scarce that number. But as some tired and gave out, others came up."[1] John Winthrop, professor at Harvard College, had much the same story, for he wrote on the fifth of June, "I have been assured by several who were in the action, that not more than 300 of our people were engaged at any one time."[2] Stiles heard the story in such form that he doubted it: that only a hundred and fifty provincials were in the action. "Yet I should think the men of courage exceeded 150."

Stiles missed the point that Gordon gives us, the fatigue of the pursuers. Thaxter adds a factor to the case, the cannon. It is very natural that some of the men that saw the cannon ball go clean through Lexington church should suddenly find that they were very tired, or that they were deeply interested in helping a wounded comrade home. Yet to men of spirit, excitement and determination will overcome fatigue. We know that some men who were at the Bridge followed the British to Charlestown. As to the story of the small number of Americans in the pursuit, there was great temptation to exaggerate downward, for the honor of the cause. It is impossible to believe that the number of the Americans, from Lexington on, was so small as even Gordon says. Mackenzie, exaggerating upward, puts the number of his opponents as "not less than 4000 actually assembled towards the latter part of the day." It is better to estimate that number as the total at all times engaged, and to believe that Percy's column was constantly beset by at least its own number of provincials. Yet as new

[1] Gordon's "History", I, 314.

[2] 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XVII, 290.

men came in, the former pursuers as frequently dropped out.

The factor not considered in any of the accounts, and likely to be entirely ignored to-day, is a purely military one—the expenditure of ammunition. The minuteman did not go out equipped like the modern rifleman, with ninety rounds in his belt and sixty in each of two bandoliers. He carried thirty-six cartridges in his box, or else, like James Hayward, he had a pound of powder in his horn and forty bullets in his pouch. Battlefield experience taught Frederick the Great to equip his men with sixty rounds; but the men who turned out on that first Patriot's Day thought themselves well provided if they had their thirty-six or forty rounds and a couple of spare flints.

Consider the work of such a man in the pursuit. Coming in, let us say like a Lexington man when the British were in retreat toward his town, and taking a good post as tne head of the column tramped past, he fired one shot and reloaded—under the circumstances, keeping under cover, an affair of a minute. A second shot and a second reloading, supposing he did not have to change his hiding place, would put him at the rear of the little column for a third shot—and he had done well. Then he must load and run and catch up, take a short cut if he could, hunt for a good stone wall or tree, and begin again. The work was fatiguing, and hard on the older men. Much of the time it was rear-guard work; there were flankers to be watched for, and a man would be delayed by his gun. For once in so often he must knap his flint or else replace it, and pick out the touchhole, and from time to time he must clean the fouled barrel. If he took pains with these he fell behind; if he neglected he suffered a misfire or perhaps worse, and

"The old gun which grandsire bore
Went back from Concord busted."

But if he were a good workman and kept his gun clean, and at some strain to wind and limb kept abreast of the column, and damned the redcoats and fired when he could, averaging one shot to every three or four minutes—then in less than three hours he would be feeling for another cartridge that was not there, or hearing the last few grains of powder rattle in the horn. We know of one actual case. Woodbury's flowery speech tells us that James Hayward, starting with his forty balls at Concord Bridge, had used all but two or three when he was killed before reaching Lexington.

When a man's ammunition was used up, what could he do? There was no place to buy more, no commissary to serve out a fresh supply. Even if he found bullets that fitted, powder was the scarcest thing in Massachusetts. He might take the cartridge box of a wounded man or of a captured regular. But on that day few men were generous to lend to others, there were not four hundred men disabled on both sides, and therefore many a man found himself, before the fight was half over, with a useless gun in his hands.

This, then, will explain Thaxter's statement that so many went back. The minuteman turned away from the fight because he could fight no more. The only consolation was that others were there to take his place.

But Heath, nevertheless, lost the best of his men, those who had stood fire. Wise Prescott at Bunker Hill refused to have his men replaced: they had stood a morning's cannonade, and were the more fit to meet the infantry assault. If similarly Heath could have had in front with him the men who had fought from Meriam's

Corner to Lexington, and more particularly those who had marched in the open to be shot at, at the Bridge, he might more safely have tried to head the regulars, and from point to point to hold them for the rearward assailants to pour in a closer fire upon the massed column.

We have no answer to the question as to what Heath did with the regiment that he formed. Doubtless little enough could be done with them. It was many months before Washington trained regiments that could be depended on to meet the British on even terms. This one, once the firing began again, probably melted away under Heath's hand. What we should like to know is that he at least tried to meet the military needs of the situation.

It is fair, however, to give him the credit for the stiff fight that took place at Menotomy. Percy's column had done little more than get well under way before the firing recommenced; and it had not gone more than five miles before, descending the hill which ended at the Foot of the Rocks, it was fiercely attacked. Perhaps Heath had seized the opportunity to plan the ambuscade. He wrote, "On descending from the high grounds in Menotomy, on to the plain, the fire was brisk. At this instant, a musket-ball came so near to the head of Dr. Warren, as to *strike the pin out of the hair of his earlock.* Soon after, the right flank of the British was exposed to the fire of a body of militia, which had come from Roxbury, Brooklyn, Dorchester, &c. For a few minutes the fire was brisk on both sides." [1] It was so brisk that, quite to the point of our present theorizing, the British were brought to a halt, and the cannon were brought into play. Though Heath says "they were now more familiar than

[1] Heath's "Memoirs", p. 14.

before", it is evident that the British blasted their way through. Not a provincial was killed by a cannon shot that day, but there was something about the fieldpieces that the militia did not like.[1]

The hot skirmish continued from the Rocks down onto the "plain." A button was shot from Percy's uniform. Doctor Eliphalet Downer, from Punch Bowl Village in Brookline, here met a regular in a bayonet duel, and killed him.

In this fighting, from Menotomy through into Cambridge, the flank guards of the British still continued to take the provincials by surprise. The Seven Young Men of Danvers who were commemorated in 1835,[2] barricaded themselves with bundles of shingles, but were taken in front and rear, and killed. Another tradition makes these young men take refuge, when approached by a flank guard, in the house of Jason Russell, a lame man of fifty-eight, who, claiming that his house was his castle, stayed to fight in it, and was killed with his self-invited guests. Mrs. Russell, returning to her house that night, found lying dead in it her husband and eleven others. And other women, returning to houses that had been deserted, found that they had been the pits of hot and bloody hand-to-hand fighting.

Of Menotomy is told the picturesque story of old Samuel Whittemore, a man of eighty years. Sending his wife and children away, he armed himself heavily, and taking a good post, fired till the soldiers came within hand-to-hand distance. Clubbed and bayoneted, he was

[1] In Lexington Historical Society Proceedings, i, 114, is a story of the Acton men, resting at Lexington, who ridiculed the cannon. But the guns saved Percy when in difficulty.

[2] See pamphlet with that title, by Daniel P. King, Salem, 1835.

left for dead, and the doctor who was called to his attendance at first declared that it was useless to try to save him. Yet Whittemore recovered, declaring that he would do the thing all over again, and lived to the age of ninety-eight.

In Menotomy occurred an incident of great value to American propaganda, providing writers and orators for many years with the statement that women in childbed had been driven naked from their homes. There was but one woman to whom the statement can even distantly apply, Hannah Adams, the wife of Deacon Joseph Adams. As he had been seen running from the house, the soldiers burst in. Eighteen days after childbirth, the wife was lying on the bed, not in it. "One of said soldiers", she deposed later, "immediately opened my curtains with his bayonet fixed, pointing the same to my breast. I immediately cried out 'For the Lord's sake do not kill me;' he replied 'Damn you;' one that stood near said, 'We will not hurt the woman, if she will go out of the house, but we will surely burn it.'"[1] Mrs. Adams escaped with her child, and tradition tells an amusing tale of the soldiers and the boy of nine, who threatened them with a licking from his father when they rummaged out the communion silver. They took it, and left the house afire; but the fire was extinguished, and the silver, sold in Boston, was afterward recovered.[2]

As already indicated, over these and other incidents

[1] Deposition of Hannah Adams, 1775. See Bibliography.

[2] For these stories of Menotomy, and others, read Smith's "West Cambridge in 1775." This is good writing of local traditions, the author in each case giving his oral authority, usually a descendant or relative of the hero of the incident. For the Hannah Adams story, see also the *Christian Register* for October 28, 1864. Smith's story of "the man on the white horse" is, however, unauthenticated even by him, and is merely interesting legend.

have been passed the severest strictures upon the conduct of the British on that day. There is no denying the things that happened. Noncombatants were killed; men who ignorantly stayed in the danger zone suffered the lot of the innocent bystander. Men fired from houses and were killed in them, or were killed because others had fired from the same house. When the troops entered Charlestown in the dusk, a boy put his head out of a window. Too many times, during the retreat, faces had appeared at windows, to be followed by musket fire—and the boy was shot at and killed.[1] Soldiers who entered houses set fire to them in their rage, or wantonly smashed whatever invited their rifle butts. Regulars were killed in the very act of plundering. Their officers complained of the men's looting, and were ashamed of it.[2] All of these things happen in war. But on the other hand, to revert to the sadly familiar parallel, we of this generation, who have seen the fair face of Europe laid waste, know that at least this visitation was light. This was not Frightfulness.[3]

[1] Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 372.

[2] Letter of Lieutenant Colonel Abercrombie, 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings XI, 305, "I cannot commend the behaviour of Our Soldiers on their retreat. As they began to plunder & payed no obediance to their Officers." Mackenzie wrote, "Many houses were plundered by the soldiers, notwithstanding the efforts of the officers to prevent it. I have no doubt this influenced the Rebels, & many of them followed us further than they would otherwise have done." Barker wrote, "The plundering was shamefull; many hardly thought of anything else; what was worse they were encouraged by some Officers." The plundering in many cases was an act of revenge; but any man who lingered for loot was in danger of his life. The loss to the Americans was quite as much in destruction as in theft.

[3] One may find everywhere in old American histories and orations, deep horror expressed at the barbarities of the British. The catalogue begins with the "Narrative of the Excursions and Ravages of the King's Troops", issued by the Provincial Congress May 22, 1775. (It prefaced the depositions to which so

frequent reference is made in these pages.) Hudson's "History of Lexington", of 1868, was reissued in 1913 with the same charges of vandalism, treachery, murder, and brutality. (I, 174–175.) A general answer to all these charges is attempted here. But for a scrutiny of many individual cases the reader is referred to Harold Murdock's "Nineteenth of April, 1775" (the section "Earl Percy's Retreat") in which modern research, and an unprejudiced point of view, have once for all made clear that our ancestor's horror of Percy and his men was based frequently upon ignorance of the facts, together with the idea that war, that thing of hate and fear and anger, can be gentler than it is.

XXXI

ON the boundary of Menotomy, which later became West Cambridge and now is Arlington, Alewife Brook runs northward into the Mystic River. To-day the highway is not narrowed for the bridge, for the width of the stream is but twenty feet; but in 1775 there must have been, in the old-fashioned way, a narrow bridge and a partial check for marching troops. Percy may well have congratulated himself that no one had had the foresight to destroy the bridge, for the water, even though fordable, would have caused much delay to his column, and would have made the crowded troops a good mark for the assailants. Perhaps Heath, as he found some other way to cross, saw the chance that he had missed; if so, he consoled himself with the thought of the wider bridge at Cambridge, ambushed and barricaded above the deep Charles.

Percy marched on, and his flankers were still active, for at Watson's corner[1] they took in the rear a group of men who had stationed themselves behind some empty casks. Here was killed Major Isaac Gardner of Brookline, the most prominent man to fall on that day.

But again the troops were growing tired, and were beginning to waste ammunition. Mackenzie, near the cannon in the rear, gives an account of the difficult fighting. In the fields the provincials were seldom visible, from the houses they were scarcely to be seen at all, but in the road in the rear, though not numerous, "they came on pretty close, frequently calling out, 'King Hancock forever'!" Again he says, "As the troops drew nearer

[1] Near present Rindge Avenue. See Heath's "Memoirs", and Coburn's "Battle of April 19."

Engraved for Murray's History of the American War.

HUGH Earl PERCY.

Printed for T. Robson, Newcastle, upon Tyne.

LORD PERCY.

In command of the Brigade which rescued Colonel Smith's Detachment.

to Cambridge the number & fire of the rebels increased, & although they did not shew themselves openly in a body in any part, except on the road in our rear, our men threw away their fire very inconsiderately, and without being certain of its effect; this emboldened them & induced them to draw nearer, but whenever a Cannonshot was fired at any considerable number, they instantly dispersed." The ammunition of the Royal Welsh beginning to fail, they were relieved by the marines, who marched next in front.

It is satisfactory to believe not only that Heath had prepared his ambush at the Cambridge bridge, but that he tried to make sure that Percy should be forced into the trap. In that hard march of nearly a dozen miles,[1] only once did any body of militia appear in the open to oppose the British. When it was too late to make a barricade, Heath must have seen that at the point where the road turns southward to the bridge, Percy could make the turn easterly toward Charlestown, and escape. There were no natural defences at that critical corner; Pelham's map shows level ground, a house and a few trees standing in fields. Let Heath have the credit, and the minutemen who perceived the crisis have the honor, that "a body" of them stood out in the open, prepared to force the regulars to take the southern road.[2]

[1] Percy repeatedly calls the distance fifteen miles, but it was less.

[2] The material for this paragraph lies in the geography of the retreat, and the various accounts of how Percy saved his men a long march and a harder fight by simply taking the other road. Barker tells of the ambush at the bridge, and says "we threw them." Heath tells that he ordered the bridge dismantled and defended; Percy tells that he heard later that the ambush was prepared. It is Percy who tells of the body of men "near Cambr, just as we turned down towards Cha^{s}town." As these were the only men whom he saw drawn up together, it is a fair inference that they were there for a purpose. The turn is at the corner of modern Beech Street, reversing Smith's route out.

It could not be done, for the minutemen had neither the numbers nor the experience. Yet they forced Percy again to a stand, for he summoned his cannon from the rear. They "dispersed", wrote Percy, "on a cannon shot being fired at them, & came down to attack our right flank in the same straggling manner the rest had done before."

And so ended Heath's effort at generalship. He had but one plan, and Percy foiled it. Before the British the road now lay clear. They had been saved some miles of road, and neither ravine nor brook lay in their way, nothing but hard marching until they should be under the protection of the fleet at Charlestown. The militia waiting at the barricaded bridge knew that they had lost their chance, when they heard the noise of the firing circling eastward away from them.

The retreat continued, the same irregular, hard-pressed, running fight as at first, yet slowly growing grimmer. There was a steady gain in American numbers. The marines were relieved by the 47th Regiment, and that in turn by the 4th. The flank guards, beginning to tire, kept closer to the column, and the minutemen drew nearer in. And at last so numerous and determined became the provincials that their fire began for the first time to harass the head of Percy's column, where the weary grenadiers and light infantry, put there because the pressure was the least, again came under fire. And when the troops passed under Prospect Hill, where there was rising ground on either side of the road, from that comparative advantage the militia struck harder, and put Percy in greater danger than he had been since Menotomy. Again he was forced to use his cannon.[1]

[1] For this paragraph, see Mackenzie's diary; also Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 78.

To one who reads the story, especially as it used to be written at the time when to glorify the country was the first duty of an American, it comes as a surprise that after these miles of fighting there were killed of the British but seventy-three, while the total of their casualties was less than three hundred.[1] From the constant use of the term marksman as applied to the Americans, one would expect the figures to be higher. It seems well, here, to return to what was earlier said as to the preparation of the Americans.

The provincials were not marksmen, for they could not be. There was not a rifle among them, and the muskets were not made for accuracy. Let any one who has handled a modern gun take into his hand one of these old flintlocks, and sight along it. His first discovery will be that it has no rear sight. It was not adapted, then, either for a good line shot or for varying ranges; it had not even the groove along which the shotgun expert takes his sight. And yet this latter comparison is the right one: the smoothbore was handled like a shotgun, the gunner sighting along the upper line of the barrel, judging his distance by experience, and deciding on the elevation by developed instinct. But for the average man that instinct is to be developed only by much shooting, and for the Yankee of 1775 the opportunity for practice was lacking for sheer absence of powder.[2] For the double reason, then, the poor gun and the small ex-

[1] The British casualties were 73 killed, 174 wounded, and 26 missing, a total of 273. The American losses were 49 killed, 39 wounded, 5 missing, a total of 93.

[2] Compare Pickering's statement that in 1769 the Salem musters gave a whole day to target practice, with the quotation in Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 36. "Last week, at the field-day in Marblehead, the regiment did not fire a single volley, nor waste a kernel of powder."

perience, the provincials could not be the marksmen that history has made them.

To apply this statement to the occasion, the British casualties were low because the Americans could not get to effective range. Thrilling pictures were painted, in the mid-nineteenth century, of family parties, grandsires, sons, and boys, potting the British from the first stone wall at a range of a dozen yards. To do such a thing was to court certain death—and we know that in certain cases the risk was taken. Lord Percy wrote:

> Nor are several of their men void of a spirit of enthusiasm, as we experienced yesterday, for many of them concealed themselves in houses, & advanced within 10 yds. to fire at me & other officers, tho' they were morally certain of being put to death themselves in an instant.

And we may remember that it was men such as these, or those caught by the flank guards when in imagined security, that swelled the American death rate. It was not the marksmanship of the regulars that caused all the forty-nine provincial deaths.

But on the whole, the Yankee was too wise to put himself in danger. He fired, not from the first stone wall that lined the road, but from the second. Calling Doolittle for the last time in evidence, look at his "Plate IV. A View of the South Part of Lexington." Here the provincials are firing at the troops from a distance which would be less than point-blank range for the modern rifle, but which for the firelock of those days was a thoroughly respectful distance. As a result, one safeguard was erected for the regular. Heath said, "It is to be remembered, that as [the British] kept the road, the fences (a large proportion of which are stone walls) covered

their flanks almost to the height of their shoulders." [1] The dropping musket ball would in part neutralize that British advantage, but not entirely. The safe firing place was commonly too far away to be sure of a snapshot aim; and again, when so far away as that, the bullet itself lost power.

The effective range of a rifle of those days was over a hundred yards, but the gun was not reliable at a hundred and fifty, and the best range was sixty yards, the common range for rifle matches. At that range a Kentucky marksman could make a hundred per cent. of hits. But the New England smoothbore, the Queen's Arm known to generations of pioneers, was an inferior weapon not merely in accuracy but in power, and its owner needed a range not much greater than sixty yards if he was to make any hits whatever.[2] Now it is greatly to be doubted whether, unless from the fancied security of a house, or because of the desperate self-sacrifice of a fanatic, sixty yards was the average range of those who shot at Percy's men that day. When Pickering at length came on the field he saw at a glance that "such distant firing was useless and trifling." [3] He viewed the fight at the time when the British had just emerged from the dangerous pass below Prospect Hill; and while we know that there was nothing trifling in such fierce brushes as that, it must be believed that in many parts of the chase, where there was no tempting advantage of safe cover, the Americans stayed at arm's length.

This is said in explanation of mathematical facts, which tell a bare tale. Frank Coburn, after study of

[1] Heath's "Memoirs", Reprint of 1904, p. 25.
[2] See Townsend Wheeler, "The American Rifle."
[3] For Pickering's "Letter", see p. 261.

the alarm lists in the Massachusetts archives, produced figures accepted by Harold Murdock, a careful computer, stating that 3763 Americans are shown to have been engaged on the Nineteenth. Accepting for safety's sake thirty-five hundred as the number of the Americans who actually got a shot at the British, what can be said for their shooting? There were two hundred and seventy-three British casualties—Gage's revised figures. Not one American in ten made his mark upon the enemy.

This is why we have needed to make our study of the minuteman's shooting-iron. To it, and to his inexperience, must be laid the fact that he did not do better. After all, he did a fair day's work. And all he asked, in the months of siege that followed, was a chance to show that he had improved.

Nor need it be supposed that there was criticism of the provincial fire at the time. Measured by the European standard of those days, it was above the average, and there was not a veteran in that flight who complained that the American fire was not sufficiently hot. Lieutenant Carter called it a "heavy and well-directed fire." [1] Mackenzie, Barker, De Berniere, held it in respect. Percy wrote of the "incessant fire, wh like a moving circle surrounded & fol^{d} us wherever we went." By every standard of those days, the American fire was formidable. Certainly no one who experienced it asked to have it bettered. It was the preparation for the fire of Bunker Hill, which for deadliness exceeded anything previously known in warfare.

[1] Letters of Lieutenant William Carter, dated 1775 and 1776, published in London in 1784. There are copies in the New York and Harvard College libraries, and a photostat copy in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

XXXII

WHEN Percy's men emerged from the shallow pass below Prospect Hill, safety was in sight. Across the low lands, beyond the marshes where the detachment had landed late the night before (and how long ago to them that must have seemed!) across the tide waters of the Charles rose Beacon Hill in Boston, and on its northern edge the spire of the church from which Revere's lanterns had shone. If the tired soldiers had but known, on that hill the people of Boston, after an agitating day of rumor and denial, of fear and hope, were clustered in numbers, watching the fight and flight.

But it was not toward Boston that the fugitives looked for safety. Nearer to them was Charlestown Neck, scarcely more than a mile away. If they could reach it, their own rear guard could hold it, and the cannon of the shipping would protect them.

With what longing the vanguard saw that promised land, it would be hard to describe. For the leaders were the men of the detachment,[1] who had marched, some of them, thirty-five miles, some nearly forty, since that wet landing the night before. They had had no rest, they had eaten little food, and with heavy accoutrements they had tramped the roads on a day that was described (however cool had been the morning before sunrise) as distressingly hot. Some were wounded; all had been in fear of their lives; they were near exhaustion. "Taking the whole together," wrote David Greene, who watched

[1] Mackenzie states that the grenadiers and light infantry kept at the head of the column.

from Beacon Hill,[1] "it was the most fatiguing day's work that I ever heard of."

The regulars were safe if they could pass that last mile. Afterwards a dispute arose as to why they were allowed to pass it. Into that old controversy it is necessary to make our own inquiry, to understand one matter that vexed the soul of so many of that time.

Our repeated references to Timothy Pickering[2] should have given the idea that he was a man of active mind, not afraid of prominence and controversy (indeed he was in disputes all his life long) with a predilection toward military affairs that caused him to write his own book of tactics, his "Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia", in which he adapted European methods to American conditions and the American temperament. He was the colonel of the Salem militia, and at Leslie's expedition to Salem in February he had boldly opposed the British advance. He was a good administrator, energetic, executive, not afraid of details; in military matters he was a reformer; but for this crisis one quality was lacking to him—one thing which only experience could supply, and in military experience he was still young. Pickering's missing quality was imagination.

Finding him quietly at his desk in Salem, on Wednesday morning, this Nineteenth of April, we must blame the system, or lack of system, which during the night before had failed to spread Paul Revere's news toward the northeast. While the alarm flew rapidly to "every

[1] See his letter in 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XIII, 56–59. See also the accompanying letter, pp. 59–62. Compare Greene's description of the retreat with that of John Andrews. Greene was a Tory, Andrews a Whig, but the descriptions are almost identical.

[2] He was at this time Timothy Pickering, Jr.; his father, still alive, had only recently published a letter deploring the tendencies of the times.

Middlesex village and farm", the men of Essex were permitted to finish out the night in peace. This was a feature of that lack of preparedness which was so striking, a result of the hope that war would not come rather than of the belief that the men of any one locality could cope alone with Gage's expedition. It was not till men were killed in Lexington that, spurred by the horror of the act, horsemen sped in all directions with the news. Not till the inhabitants of Salem had scattered to their daily tasks did the news of the march of the regulars arrive.

Pickering wrote in 1807:

I was in my office (the Registry of Deeds) in Salem, when Captain Epes of Danvers came in (between eight and nine o'clock in the morning, I think it was nearest nine) and said some person had brought information to Danvers, that British troops had marched from Boston, and attacked the militia at Lexington. I think he commanded a company in my regiment; and it is natural to suppose (& such is my impression) that he asked for orders; and there is the like impression on my mind, that I expressed to him my opinion, that his and the other Danvers company should march, without waiting for the assembling of the whole regiment.

We have already seen that these companies did march, and with such promptness and haste that the seven young men of Danvers were killed, poor fellows, in a town as far away as Menotomy.

But Pickering had no such fire as the Danvers captain. So far as he could see, there was no reason for haste, or even for marching at all. Calling a meeting of the selectmen, of whom he was one, they and other leading gentlemen deliberated the matter. "Those who knew the distance of Lexington from Salem, and its relative situation to Boston (of which I had no personal knowledge,

and but an indistinct idea) observed, that the British troops would certainly have returned to Boston long before the Salem men could reach the scene of the reported action." [1] In other words, Pickering did not perceive that the objective of the British was not Lexington but Concord, nor did he imagine the delays, and particularly the return by way of Charlestown, which would make it easily possible for the Salem men to intercept the British retreat.

It was only a patriotic gesture, then, "to satisfy our fellow citizens that we were of one mind with them", when Pickering gave the order to march. Much time had already been lost in calling the meeting of the selectmen, and in assembling the militia. Even then Pickering had no great belief in the undertaking. He is very frank about it. "So strong was the impression, that to proceed, under an idea of falling in with the British, were vain, and impracticable,—we halted soon after passing the Bell-Tavern, in full expectation of momently receiving information of their having returned to Boston. But none soon arriving, we (perhaps in twenty minutes) resumed our march. I remember Mr. Hasket Derby expressed himself to this effect—*If we are to proceed, let us wait no longer.*"

The murmuring of his own men, then, caused Pickering to proceed. The sting of lost opportunity came to him when he received the news of the retreat toward Charlestown. Then he hastened his march, and made such time that his biographer points out that it brought him into

[1] On this controversy, when revived in 1807, Pickering wrote two letters. From the shorter, addressed to Governor Sullivan, and which was printed in newspapers of the time, I take only this short quotation. The other excerpts are all from Pickering's longer letter, unpublished, and at present in the collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

disrepute. Had he not been in sight when the British were escaping, he would not have been blamed at all. His biographer forgot that the comparison with the Danvers men would have been inevitable.

Pickering had with him, not the seven hundred men of his regiment, but only the three hundred men of Salem. Yet it was a good body of troops, and if his knowledge meant anything, they should have been the best drilled battalion that turned out on that day. They topped Winter Hill at last and saw the running fight. Evening was so near that the flashes of the guns were visible. Were the Salem men too late?

Then intervened one last and decisive delay. Apparently Pickering's aide had ridden in advance to Heath, asking for orders.[1] The aide, returning, found the Salem men at a halt, just having loaded their guns, but about to proceed. Heath's answer to Pickering was, "that the British had artillery in their rear, and could not be approached by musketry alone: and that he desired to see me."—It was the end. Heath wanted his omelette but feared to break his eggs; he was not ready to throw the Salem companies against the flank of Percy's column in the attempt to stop it, when the hundreds who were still attacking in the rear would have had their last chance at the redcoats.

[1] Heath's "Memoirs" tell of the coming of the aide, and Pickering's letter gives Heath's answer.

The controversy as to the delay of the men of Salem began almost immediately, and the town, feeling itself aggrieved, in August memorialized the General Court "that its character had been greatly injured and some of its inhabitants insulted and abused." The Court in return resolved that there had been nothing in the conduct of the town of Salem "inimical to the liberties and privileges of America." (See the "'Life of Pickering", I, 74–77.) Gordon raised the question in his "History"; Mercy Warren did the same; and a number of years later Bancroft, referring to the old discontent, was terribly abused by a pamphleteer

It is not to be supposed that Percy would not have cleared the way. There was not a man in his command but would have welcomed the chance of one stand-up fight with the elusive enemy. The grenadiers, in front, would have asked nothing better than an opportunity to retrieve their disgrace. They had one last shot in their guns; they had their bayonets; they would gladly have died if, like Britons, they might only strike home. But the chance was denied them.

The fear of the cannon, after all, won the day. While Heath and Pickering had their fruitless conference, the footsore Salem colonel saw the British column ascending Bunker Hill. They were safe, and the long fight was over.

named Swett, quite in the style of Josiah Adams. In the whole story there is nothing of wilful neglect, and when there arose a political controversy about it in 1807, Pickering frankly told the truth. He wished to appeal to Heath for his memories of the case, but Heath was by that time senile. It was not necessary, however, that Pickering should ask why other towns should not have done the work he failed in, and particularly why the Marblehead men did not march. A good many of the Marblehead men were away on fishing voyages (the Fisheries Act not yet having taken effect) and the remainder were so overawed by British war vessels in the harbor that they waited till dusk to slip away from the town. (See a clipping from the *Baltimore North American*, April 13, 1808, in the Pickering Miscellanea, 1, 56. Massachusetts Historical Society.)

XXXIII

DUSK fell as Percy's men came to a halt. Charlestown had been much agitated by his coming. In the afternoon, learning that armed men had been going out of the town toward Cambridge, Gage had threatened "the most disagreeable consequences" if more went to attack the troops. When news came that the regulars were approaching, there was almost a panic in the town. Some fled from their homes, but learning that no danger threatened them, they gradually returned. Entering the town, the weary soldiers were guarded by men whom Gage sent over to hold the Neck; the footsore men asked for nothing but rest, and for drink, which the inhabitants were glad to hand out to them.[1] Some of the regulars took their rest at "a place called Bunkers Hill",[2] a vantage point which Gage ought to have held from that moment. But within a short time he began to ferry his men across to Boston; and the next day they were all back again in their barracks.[3] By that time a new episode had commenced in the history of New England. During the night watchfires had been built on the mainland opposite both Charlestown and Boston Necks, and in the circuit between them homespun militia were hastily establishing themselves. The siege of Boston had begun.[4]

[1] See in Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 371, the petition of Jacob Rogers, giving a description of Charlestown on that evening.

[2] See MS. diary of Samuel Weld of Roxbury, in Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence.

[3] Mackenzie gives a dry account of the crossing to Boston. "It was past twelve at night" before his regiment was in Boston.

[4] The last military operation of the day was semi-naval. Gage sent a small sailing vessel up the Charles, presumably to attack the rebels who were am-

Immediately broke out a flood of political writing concerning the Nineteenth; out of this arose a cloud of accusations and recriminations which only time has cleared away. They serve to show the political passions of the time, relieved against the eternal background of men's temperaments, interests, and prejudices. Apart from that, they are mostly painful reading. The human truth is best to be gained from the few confidential statements made by individuals to correspondents or to their diaries.

On their part the Americans wrote little. The leaders were concocting the political papers referred to, in which the feelings were genuine enough, but hot-headed and extreme. In his "Letter" dated a month later, Gordon expressed the greatest satisfaction with events, but wrote with bitterness and resentment. There are few American letters of the time untinged by the fervent patriotism whose phraseology is now so out of date.[1] Wholly to be respected as they may be, their warmth and their exaltation bear very indirectly on the cool facts of the situation. The letters of Edmund Quincy, for example, are ardent but quite blind [2]; they are a symptom of that rising prejudice against everything British which lasted in America through generations.

Of all the patriot leaders, Joseph Warren was most able to keep his head clear. Before the Nineteenth he was able to judge independently of Gage, and to see in

bushed at the Cambridge bridge. It ran aground, and exchanged shots with the provincials ashore. See Diary of John Rowe, 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, x, 90–91. Also Heath's "Memoirs", p. 15.

[1] Perhaps the most amusing letter of the time was written by Mrs. John Winthrop, in the Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings for April, 1875. In classic language, freely quoting Milton, she heavily describes her experiences.

[2] Photostat copies are in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

him honesty and benevolence.[1] When the break had come, on the very next day he was able to write frankly to Gage, "I have many things which I wish to say to Your Excellency, and most sincerely wish I had broken through the formalities which I thought due to your rank, and freely have told you all I knew or thought of public affairs; and I must ever confess, whatever may be the event, that you generously gave me such opening, as I now think I ought to have embraced."[2]

But in the next words Warren admitted that it was the "vileness and treachery" of the Tories that surrounded Gage, that made him refrain from speaking. And even though in a later letter he expressed his opinion, different from that of most, that Gage was honestly deceived as to the first firing at Lexington, on the very day when he wrote the governor so frankly he put his hand to a circular letter addressed to the towns, the tone of which was largely ruled by the sentiment of his fellow members of the Committee of Safety. In the Massachusetts archives is this letter in his handwriting; it speaks of "the barbarous murders committed on our innocent brethren", and the "butchering hands of an inhuman soldiery."[3] Thus even in such generous-minded men as Warren, the growth of hostile feeling was prompt. If the saying is true that we should not learn to know our opponents well, lest we cease to hate them, here we see the reverse operating—out of ignorance as to motives and even as to acts was forming the proper soil for hate.

[1] See letter to Josiah Quincy, Jr., November 21, 1774; Frothingham's "Life of Warren", p. 395.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 467.

[3] Frothingham's "Life of Warren", pp. 488 and 466. Also in Force's "Archives", IV, II, 433, under date of April 28.

On the other hand, it is not to be supposed that the British grew to like the Americans any better because they had found them formidable in the field. The old line officers thought the methods of the provincials inexcusably barbaric.[1] Major Donkin in his book of two years later[2] uses almost Warren's words when he speaks of the "valiant soldiers *inhumanly* and *wantonly* butchered [while] peaceably marching to and from Concord." He refers with horror to the scalping, as do many other writers of the time. Here we see the beginning of the deep disgust at all things American which so long possessed so many British of the Tory type.

Nor even when the Americans were not accused as savages did writers feel kindly towards them. They were still considered cowardly: Donkin calls them "enthousiasts," and Evelyn[3] uses the same word to explain the performance of the Americans. Poor Smith knew better, but smarting from his chagrin and his wound, he could not forbear complaining. "Notwithstanding the enemy's numbers, they did not make one gallant attempt during so long an action." De Berniere makes no comment. His narrative ends, "So that in the course of two days, from a plentiful town, we were reduced to the disagreeable necessity of living on salt provisions, and fairly blocked up in Boston."

Poor Barker could only complain. "Thus ended this Expedition, which from beginning to end was as ill plan'd and ill executed as it was possible to be." He analyzed

[1] See letter in Force's "Archives", IV, II, 440. "They did not fight us like a regular army, only like savages."

[2] "Military Collections and Remarks", by Major Donkin. New York, 1777. It is dedicated to Percy.

[3] "Memoir and Letters of Captain W. Glanville Evelyn." Much of the same material is in "The Evelyns in America."

the delays, and summed up the whole. "Thus for a few trifling stores the Grenrs. and Lt. Infantry had a march of about 50 Miles (going and returning) through an Enemy's Country, and in all human probability must every Man have been cut off if the Brigade had not fortunately come to their assistance."

It is finally to Percy that we must turn for a summing up of the affair. He was not the man to criticize his superiors, more especially as their blundering gave him the chance to distinguish himself so signally. The letters of the time give him full honor; his personal bravery was much praised; Gage reported to Dartmouth his "remarkable activity and conduct." [1] It was a hard task well done when Percy brought his column safely across Charlestown Neck. He had no fault to find, then, with the opportunity that had come his way. Looking back upon his experience, he found himself full of respect for the fighting qualities of his opponents. The next day he wrote:

During the whole affair the Rebels attacked us in a very scattered, irregular manner, but with perseverance & resolution, nor did they ever dare to form into any regular body. Indeed, they knew too well what was proper, to do so.

Whoever looks upon them as an irregular mob, will find himself much mistaken. They have men amongst them who know very well what they are about, having been employed as Rangers agst the Indians & Canadians.

. . . .

You may depend upon it, that as the Rebels have now had time to prepare, they are determined to go thro' with it, nor will the insurrection here turn out so des-

[1] Gage to Dartmouth, April 2 (?), 1775. Volume of "England and America" for 1775–1776, Bancroft Transcripts, New York Public Library, pp. 101–102. Also *footnotes* in Percy "Letters", pp. 53–55.

picable as it is perhaps imagined at home. For my part, I never believed, I confess, that they wd have attacked the King's troops, or have had the perseverance I found in them yesterday.[1]

Percy's backward look, and his prophecy, set the situation in its right perspective. Before the day was out Percy's opponents had impressed him very thoroughly. Here was an insurrection begun in a very workmanlike manner, as to the outcome of which he would rather not commit himself. Upon the military situation he is entitled to this last word.

[1] Percy would not consider the militia who stood out in the open to oppose him at the turn of the road in Cambridge, to be a regular body, because their formation would not be according to the rules.

The frequent quotation, "Lord Percy said at table, he never saw anything equal to the intrepidity of the New England minute-men," (Almon's Remembrancer, III, 111) is from a letter from "a gentleman at Charles-Town, S. C." Writing May 10th, he got his information with unusual promptitude.

XXXIV

IN this study of local history, the ancient subject matter is used again. Though in miniature, here is fighting, here are heroes, here are personal encounter, terror, wounds, and death. In the tapestry the background has receded; and economics and politics, the statesman and the writer, are forgotten in the question of What Happened.

And though this may appear to be opposed to the large-scale writing of history according to modern theories, it is not opposed in fundamentals. For there come, in every era, times when the men of action shoulder aside the men of thought, and take the conduct of affairs into their own hands. Then the very substance of history changes. It may be that the men of action perform what was planned by the men of thought—and no one will deny that this was true in the present case. But the method of doing belongs to themselves, also the amount of what is done. When once again they leave the scene of history, the men of action have utterly changed the economic and the political landscape. And while they hold the stage they manufacture history according to the ancient manner, by strength and by arms.

War is commonly an attempt to settle great questions, and the settlement, as we in 1925 know only too well, is not always good. Yet war is not always to be avoided, nor are its settlements always bad. If Americans believe that their great experiment has justified itself, they are bound to feel interest in its beginning.

That beginning, here narrated, was not accidental. Given the insistence of both sides on their beliefs, put the

conservative political and military mind of the Englishman against the progressive thought and mobile action of the American, and the country around Boston—the very road to Concord—was sure to be the scene of the outbreak.

Nor was the beginning unworthy. Believing they saw in danger the liberty on which a century and a half of sacrifice and effort had been expended, the men of Massachusetts rose in its defence. They prepared to die for it.

But instead, they won. No man with any imagination can ponder the story of the farmers in arms, driving the regulars back to their garrison, without a grim smile at the conquest.

There was virtue on both sides. The men of Lexington, Acton, and Concord, were no braver than the men whom they opposed. In the end we feel deep interest in the men who have played their parts before us—perplexed Gage, steadfast Warren, honest Pitcairn, earnest Emerson, gallant Percy, clumsy but dogged Heath. Very important, though so dimly seen, is the little group of farmers on the hill at Concord who decided on the attack. The diarists and letter-writers have let us look into their minds; they are good fellows, and fighters all. The thousands unnamed who snatched their muskets from the wall and hurried to the British line of march are men to be admired. Most of all is our wonder called out by the British rank and file, bearing the burden of a long march and a bewildering defeat, stanch to the last.

It is but a fragmentary picture that we can get at best, the flickering of a broken film. But there will ever stand out in the story of the Nineteenth of April something clear and fine, the meeting of strong men, at the beginning of great things.

For nothing can dim the significance of the day. Its story rang through the colonies, and called men to arms. For us at this distance of time it is clearly seen as the electric spark that started new events, or as the action of the stone which, cast into a quiescent solution, began the sudden crystallizing. It set two nations apart, and out of that beginning grew America.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE following bibliography makes no attempt at a complete list of books dealing with the Nineteenth of April, 1775. Such a list is neither necessary nor desirable. In spite of the fact that a multitude of writings on the subject has been published—books, orations, pamphlets, chapters in histories, magazine and newspaper articles, even poems—the greater part of them are useless to the research student of to-day. They sprang from a sentimental and undiscriminating patriotism which now is happily out of date. The revolution in the methods of writing American history is caused by the desire to know the simple truth concerning our forefathers, unveiled by romantic feeling.

Americans are idealists, and this is fortunate: the fact has influenced many a crisis in our development, not least among them the period here studied. But true idealism demands no disguise for our history, and it is well to learn that our ancestors were men like ourselves. The truth of our story is in itself quite as interesting as romance, and once it has been learned the shock will not prove to have harmed us.

No place in this list is given, therefore, to merely fine writing, to the screaming of the eagle, to the twisting of the lion's tail. For the modern reader such literature has no longer any value.[1]

Nor is there value in listing compilations. They have been read, but commonly with disappointment. One

[1] See on this point Charles M. Andrews' "The Colonial Background of the American Revolution", pp. 171 to 177.

who has been to the sources recognizes the second or third-hand origin of most of their material.

It is otherwise with tradition. This, as differentiated from documentary history, is family story or local tale handed down at not too great distance from the occurrence. While naturally such stories gain a little in the process, there is commonly an easily discerned basis for truth. If they are not exact, they are approximate, and are at least illustrative. To reject tradition is to abandon the basis of all early history, and the endeavor here has been made to employ tradition wherever its use seems justified. Much traditional literature, therefore, is included in this list.

But the main endeavor in writing this book has been to base it on the existing documents. Many of these have long been known; others are here used, so far as the writer knows, for the first time. Pains have been taken to refer the reader to their present whereabouts, or in the case of well-known sources, to reliable reprints, in order that he may come to his own conclusions.

No pretence is made that the writer has found all the existing manuscripts that bear upon the day of Concord and Lexington. In the great collections at Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington, to name only those at which the writer has studied, there may still be important papers containing new facts. In the strangest places, the most unexpected corners, documents already known have been found; and from some New England garret or some homestead in the West, family papers may yet cast new light on our story. Further, the author acknowledges that he has not searched all the available printed matter; its volume is too vast. He will welcome any omissions that can be brought to his attention. But

as time goes on, there will be less and less likelihood of new revelations. And for the present, the list here given is intended to include all material which has helped the writer in the preparation of this book.

Abercrombie, Lieutenant Colonel James. Letter of. In 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XI, 305.

Adams, Charles Francis. "Massachusetts, Its Historians and Its History." Boston, 1893.

Adams, James Truslow. "Revolutionary New England, 1691–1776." Boston, 1923.

Adams, Josiah. "Acton Centennial Address", Boston, 1835.
Letter to Lemuel Shattuck, Esq., of Boston. Boston, 1850.

Adams, Samuel. The Samuel Adams papers, in the MSS. division, New York Public Library, contain many original documents of this period.
"Life and Public Services of Samuel Adams." By William V. Wells.

Alarm List. Call for election of officers. In Chamberlain Papers (B. XII. 51), Boston Public Library.

Allen, William. *See* "American Biographical Dictionary."

Almon, J. *See* "Remembrancer."

"American Annals." *See* Holmes, Abiel.

"American Archives." *See* Force, Peter.

"American Biographical Dictionary." By William Allen.
Contains biography of William Gordon, and others of the period.

American Revolution. *See* Andrews, Charles M., and McIlwaine.

Andrews, Charles M. "The Colonial Background of the American Revolution." New Haven, 1924.

Andrews, John. Letters of. In Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings 1864–1865, pp. 322–412.

Annual Register. Consult the volumes for 1774 and 1775.

Austin, James T. "Life of Elbridge Gerry." Boston, 1828.

Baldwin, Loammi, Diary of. In Hurd's "History of Middlesex County, Mass.", Vol. I, pp. 447*ff*.

Bancroft, George. "History of the United States." Published through twenty years and more, following 1837; still of value for its completeness of detail.

Barker, Lieutenant John, of the King's Own Regiment. Diary. In *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. XXXIX, pp. 389–401, 544–554. Notes by Horace Scudder. Also in "The British in Boston", Boston, 1924. Edited by Harold Murdock. The text somewhat fuller, and the notes more complete. Already out of print.

Barrett, Amos. Letter of (describing Concord Fight). In "Journal and Letters of Rev. Henry True", privately printed for Henry True. Marion, Ohio, 1900.
Also in "The Concord Fight." Privately printed by Thomas Todd. Boston, 1924.

Beardsley, Reverend William. "An old New Haven Engraver and his Work: Amos Doolittle." 1910.

Bedford Flag, The. Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, December, 1885, pp. 166, 199.
Also in "New England Historical and Genealogical Register," 1871, Vol. XXV, 138–139.

Belknap, Jeremy. Journal for October, 1775. In 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, IV, pp. 84–86.

Bland, Humphrey. "A Treatise of Military Discipline." 7th Edition, London, 1753.

Blood, Thaddeus. Letter of. In *Boston Advertiser*, April 20, 1886.

Boston Committee of Correspondence, Proceedings of. In MSS. division, New York Public Library.

Boston, siege of. *See* Frothingham, Richard.

Botta, Charles. "History of the War of Independence." Translated from the Italian. London, 1844.

Burgoyne, Right Honorable John. "Political and Military Episodes." By E. B. de Fonblanque. London, 1876.

Carter, William. Letters of, 1775 and 1776. London, 1784. ("A Genuine Detail, etc.")

Chamberlain, Mellen. "The Chamberlain Papers", Boston Public Library, contain many autographs and documents of the period.

Chamberlain. Mrs. Phebe Ripley Haskins. A Letter to her sister, March, 1888, concerning William Emerson. MS. copy lent by Doctor Edward W. Emerson.

Clarke, Reverend Jonas. "Narrative." ("Opening of the War of the Revolution.") 1777, and various reprints. *See* Hudson's "Lexington", 1.

Coburn, Frank Warren. "Battle of April 19, 1775." Lexington, 1912. (There is a special edition containing the muster rolls.)
"Fiction and Truth about the Battle on Lexington Common", Lexington, 1918.

Committee of Safety. Records of. In "Journals of Each Provincial Congress", pp. 516–518.
Also in Force's "American Archives", Series IV, Vol. II, col. 742*ff*.

Concord Fight, Story of. *See*, under Barrett, Amos; Barker, John; Depositions; Diaries; Drake's "History of Middlesex County"; Hudson, Charles; Hudson, Frederic; Hurd's "History of Middlesex County"; Keyes, John S.; Reynolds, Grindall; Ripley, Ezra; Tolman, George; Murdock, Harold.

"History of Concord, Mass." *See* Shattuck, Lemuel.

Danvers. "Seven Young Men of Danvers." *See* King, Daniel P.

Dawes, William. *See* under Holland, W. H.

"Dealings with the Dead." By a Sexton of the Old School. Boston, 1856.

De Berniere, Ensign Henry. "General Gage's Instructions. . . with a Curious Narrative of Occurrences." Boston, 1779. Reprinted in 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, IV, pp. 204*ff*.

Depositions. 1. Concord and Lexington Depositions of 1775. (For the originals, which are in the libraries of Harvard and the University of Virginia, and their separation at the dispersal of the Lee papers, *see* Justin Winsor's account in *Magazine of American History*, Vol. XVIII, p. 29.) Printed by Isaiah Thomas. Worcester, 1775. Reprinted in Force's "American Archives"; in Shattuck's "History of Concord", pp. 341*ff*.; in "Source Problems in United States History", pp. 28*ff*.; incomplete in Almon's "Remembrancer" for 1775.

2. Lexington Depositions of 1825. In Phinney's "History of the Battle of Lexington." Reprinted in part in "Source Problems in United States History", pp. 46*ff*.

3. Concord Depositions bearing on Lexington, in Ripley's "History of the Fight at Concord."

4. Acton Depositions of 1835, in Josiah Adams' "Address", also in his "Letter."

5. Acton Depositions of 1845, are (with the foregoing) in Josiah Adams' "Letter."

6. Paul Revere's Deposition. *See* under Revere.

"Detail and Conduct of the American War." Third edition, London, 1780.

Devens, Richard, Memorandum of. In Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 57, *footnote*.

Diaries. *See* under Baldwin, Loammi; Belknap, Jeremy; Barker, John; Emerson, William; Howe, John; Haldimand, Frederic; Mackenzie, Lieut.; McClure, Reverend David; Pope, Richard; Rowe, John; Warren, John; Weld, Samuel.

Donkin, Major (R). "Military Collections and Remarks." New York, 1777. Very rare. A copy is at the Widener Library, Harvard College.

Doolittle, Amos, and Ralph Earl. Four engravings, published December 1775 at New Haven. 1. The Battle of Lexington. 2. A View of the Town of Concord. 3. The Engagement at the North Bridge, in Concord. 4. A View of the South Part of Lexington. 12 inches high; 17 7/8 inches long.

"An Old New Haven Engraver and his Work: Amos Doolittle." Reverend William Beardsley, 1910.

Drake, Samuel Adams. "Historic Fields and Mansions of Middlesex." Boston, 1879.

"History of Middlesex County, Mass." 2 vols., Boston, 1880. These contain mostly traditional material.

Earl, Ralph. *See* Doolittle, Amos.

East Boston, History of. *See* under Sumner, William H.

Emerson, Reverend William. Diary of the 19th of April, 1775. The original is in the possession of Dr. Edward W. Emerson, Concord, Massachusetts. Reproduced in facsimile in "Proceedings of the Centennial Celebration of Concord Fight", Concord, 1876. Opposite p. 165.

"A Sermon upon the Present Military Manœuvres in Concord", March 13, 1775. The Text from 2 Chronicles xiii, 12. MS. copy lent by Doctor Edward W. Emerson.

"An Oration for the Nineteenth of April, 1776." MS. copy lent by Doctor Edward W. Emerson.

"A Chaplain of the Revolution", by Edward W. Emerson. In Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, LV, 88*ff*.

Evelyn, Capt. W. Glanville. "Memoir and Letters of." Edited by G. D. Scull. Printed for private circulation.

"The Evelyns in America." Edited and annotated by G. D. Scull. Printed for private circulation. Oxford, 1881. Contains much of the material in the foregoing.

Firearms. *See* for their effectiveness in 1775:

British Military Library or Journal. London, 1799.

Algarotti's "Letters." London, 1783.

William Thomson's "Military Memoirs." London, 1804.

Duane's "Military Dictionary." Philadelphia, 1810.

Townsend Wheeler, "The American Rifle." New York, 1918.

C. W. Sawyer, "Firearms in American History." 1910.

Marshal Saxe, "Reveries." Edinburgh, 1759.

Force, Peter. "American Archives." Series IV, Vol. II. Washington, 1839. Force's voluminous collected material is generally accepted as trustworthy, although his sources are seldom given.

Foster, Edmund. Letter to Daniel Shattuck, dated Littleton, March 10, 1825. Printed in part in Ripley's "History of the Fight at Concord." Second edition, pp. 22–25.

Frothingham, Richard. "Life and Times of Joseph Warren." Boston, 1865.

"History of the Siege of Boston, and of the Battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill." Boston, 1849.

"The Alarm on the Night of April 19th." Boston, 1876.

Frothingham, Thomas G. "Guide to the Military History of the World War." *See* Appendix, pp. 283*ff*.

Gage, General Thomas. Correspondence with Lord Dartmouth.

Originals in Colonial Office, London.

Printed incomplete in Sparks' "Writings of Washington", III, pp. 507*ff*.

Copies in Bancroft Transcripts, in the volume for 1774 and 1775 of "England and America", MSS. division, New York Public Library and in the Sparks Papers, Widener Library, Harvard College. Abstract in 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XIV, 345*ff*.

"A Circumstantial Account of an Attack . . . on His Majesty's Troops." Printed in Force's "American Archives", IV, II, col. 435. Also (incomplete) in "Source Problems in United States History", pp. 19–21. Facsimile in "Memorial History of Boston", III, p. 73, and in Harold Murdock's "The Nineteenth of April, 1775", p. 34.

"Gentleman's Compleat Military Dictionary." 18th edition. Boston, 1759.

Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle, Vol. XLV, for the Year MDCCLXXV. By Sylvanus Urban, Gent. London. Besides maps contains little of value.

Gerry, Elbridge, Life of. *See* James T. Austin.

Gibbon, Edward. Letter to Edward Eliot, on the news of April 19. Eliot MS., quoted in Mahon's [Stanhope's] "History of England", VI. Appendix xxvii–xxviii. Interesting as reporting Hutchinson's opinion.

Gordon, Reverend William. Letter, Watertown, May 17, 1775. In Force's "Archives", Series IV, Vol. II, col. 626*ff*.

"History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America." Various English and American editions.

Green, David. Letter of. (Describing the fighting as seen from Boston.) In 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XIII, 56–59. Also the companion letters, pp. 59–62.

Haldimand, Frederic. The Haldimand papers are in the British Museum. Copies in the Canadian archives, and abstracts are in the archive reports from 1886 to 1889. His diary begins with 1786, and is given (in French and in translation) in the report for 1889. It has but a single reference to affairs in Boston, quoted here.

Harris, General Lord George. Life and Services of. By the Right Honorable S. R. Lushington. London, 1840. On pp. 40*ff*. are found brief references to his service with Percy's brigade. The writer's misconception of the situation is complete.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "Mosses from an Old Manse." Numerous editions. The preface, entitled "The Old Manse", contains Hawthorne's remarks upon the battle.

Heath, General William. "The Heath Papers." Collection of original MSS. is in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

"Memoirs of . . . during the American War." Written by himself. Boston, 1798 Reprinted, 1904, edited by R. R. Wilson in the series, "Source Books of American History."

Holland, Henry W. "William Dawes and his Ride with Paul Revere." Privately printed. Boston, 1878.

Holmes, Abiel. "American Annals." Cambridge, 1805.

Howe, John. Journal of, while he was employed as a British Spy. Printed in Concord, N. H., 1827. Reprinted in Hurd's "History of Middlesex County", II, 579. Not a journal but a narrative, of no historic value.

Hudson, Charles. "History of the Town of Lexington, Mass." Boston, 1868. Revised and continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society. 1913.

Hudson, Frederic. "The Concord Fight." In *Harper's Magazine* for May, 1875, pp. 777*ff*. Has many traditional stories.

Hurd, Duane Hamilton. "History of Middlesex County, Mass." Philadelphia, 1890.

"Impartial History of the War in America." London, 1780. 3 vols. Reprinted in Boston, 1781, 1782, 1784.
Its chief value is in its plates, which vary in the English and American editions.

"Journals of Each Provincial Congress." Boston, 1838. This contains the fragmentary records of the three provincial congresses, pieced out with documents and newspaper reports; also the journals of the Committee of Safety and various other records of value.

Keyes, John S. "Story of an Old House." Concord, 1902.

King, Daniel P. "Address Commemorative of Seven Young Men of Danvers who were Slain in the Battle of Lexington." Salem, 1835.

Letters. *See* under Barrett, Amos; Carter, William; Evelyn, W. Glanville; Foster, Edmund; Gibbon, Edward; Green, David; Letters, Intercepted; Otis, Harrison Gray; Percy, Hugh; Price, Richard; Thaxter, Joseph; Walpole, Horace; Winthrop, Mrs. John; Winthrop, John.

Letters intercepted by the provincials are to be found in the "Journals of Each Provincial Congress", and in Force's "Archives", Series IV, Vol. II, col. 439*ff*.

Lexington, History of. *See* Hudson, Charles.
The Battle of Lexington. *See* Clarke, Jonas; Coburn, Frank; Doolittle, Amos; Murdock, Harold; Muzzey, Reverend A. B.; Phinney, Elias; and depositions, diaries and letters.

Lloyd, H. G. "History of Infantry."

Lossing, Benson J. "Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution." 2 vols. New York, 1835. Largely traditional material.

"Loyalists of American Revolution." Sabine, Lorenzo.

Mackenzie, Lieutenant. Diary of. In 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, V (for March, 1890), pp. 391*ff*.
Gives the most detailed account of Percy's retreat.

"Manual Exercise, The, as ordered by His Majesty in 1764." Boston, New England. (Late 1774 or early 1775.)

The American abbreviated reprint. I have found no copy of the English book.

Maps. For a list of maps of Boston and environs at this period, *see* introduction to third volume of "Memorial History of Boston." The best map for study is Pelham's, London, 1777, reproduced in that volume. There are unpublished maps in the Congressional Library at Washington, among them two supposed to be by Berniere and Browne. These are sketch maps, and not accurate.

Marrett, Reverend John, Diary of. In "Henry Dunster and his Descendants", pp. 84*ff*. By Samuel Dunster. Central Falls, 1876.

Martyn, Charles. "Life of Artemas Ward." New York, 1921.

Massachusetts Archives, in the State House at Boston.

Contain the muster rolls, printed in Coburn's "Battle of April 19th, 1775." special edition.

Massachusetts Historical Society's Publications.

These are chiefly the Collections and Proceedings, here referred to as Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, and Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings. Invaluable for historical study.

Massachusetts Papers, 1774–1780. A collection of copies of letters and documents, in Historical Society of Philadelphia (Case VII, 3d floor MSS.).

McClure, Reverend David, Diary of. In 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, xvi, 155–158.

McGlenen, E. W. City Registrar of Boston. Unpublished lectures.

McIlwain, Charles Howard. "The American Revolution." New York, 1923.

Middlesex. *See* Hurd and Drake.

Military Collections. *See* Donkin.

"Military Dictionary." By William Duane. Philadelphia, 1810.

"Gentleman's Compleat Military Dictionary." 18th edition. Boston, 1759.

Moulton, Martha. Petition of, Feb. 4, 1776. In Frothingham's "Siege of Boston", p. 369.

Murdock, Harold. "The Nineteenth of April, 1775." Boston, 1923. Excellent historical criticism. Editor of "The British in Boston." Cambridge, 1924. (The diary of Lieutenant John Barker.)

Muzzey, Reverend A. B. "The Battle of Lexington, with Personal Recollections of the Men Engaged in it." In "New England Historical and Genealogical Register", Vol. xxxi, pp. 377*ff*. Traditional material.

Newspaper reports. The newspaper reports are full of rumor and political feeling. Chief are in *Salem Gazette*, April 21, 1775; *Essex Gazette*, April 25, 1775; *Massachusetts Spy*, Worcester, May 3, 1775.

These reports borrow largely from each other, and were used in the "Coffin Broadside" (reproduced in Murdock's "Nineteenth of April, 1775").

Otis, Harrison Gray, Letter concerning the 19th of April, 1775. In *Boston Advertiser*, April 19, 1858.
Also in "One Hundred Years Ago", by E. E. Hale, Boston, 1875.

Percy, Hugh. "Letters of Hugh, Earl Percy from Boston and New York, 1774–1776." Edited by Charles Knowles Bolton. Boston, 1902.
Besides Percy's letters home, contains his report to Gage, also the draft of the same.

Phinney, Elias. "History of the Battle at Lexington." Boston, 1825. Reprinted 1875.

Pickering, Timothy, Jr. "Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia ", 1775.
MS. letter describing the events of the 19th of April, 1775. In Massachusetts Historical Society.
Letter to Governor Sullivan, same subject. In Pickering Miscellanea, Massachusetts Historical Society, XLVIII, p. 29.
Also in "Interesting Correspondence between Governor Sullivan and Colonel Pickering." Boston, 1828, pp. 24–25.
"Life of Timothy Pickering, I, by his Son."

Pierpont, Robert. Statement concerning an interview with Gage, March 20, 1775. In Samuel Adams papers, MSS. division, New York Public Library.

Pope, Richard. A MS. compilation apparently from different sources, having on the title page "Richard Pope's Book." The first part an account of the events of the 19th April, 1775. Photostat copy in MSS. division, New York Public Library.
The original sold at the Anderson Galleries, New York, January 10, 1921. Now in the Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Gabriel, California, as "Huntington M. 66."

Price, Richard. Correspondence of. In 2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XVII, 262*ff*.

Provincial Congress. *See* Journals of.

Quincy, Dorothy. *See* Scott, Madam.

"Remembrancer, or Impartial Repository of Public Events." London. Printed for J. Almon. *See* volumes for 1774 and 1775.

Revere, Paul. His Deposition and his Letter, two MS. accounts of his ride, are in the Massachusetts Historical Society.
Printed in Old South Leaflet, No. 222, with comment by S. E. Morison. Also in "Life of Revere", by Goss. *See* below.
"Life of Colonel Paul Revere", by Elbridge Henry Goss. 2 vols., Boston, 1891.

Revere's signals.
"The Alarm on the Night of April 18th, 1775." Richard Frothingham.
"The Paul Revere Signal Lanterns." By William Wheildon. 1876.

"Paul Revere's Signal." By Reverend John Lee Watson. Boston, 1876. Also in 1 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, xv, pp. 163*ff*.

"Reveries." *See* under Saxe, Marshal.

Reynolds, Reverend Grindall. "Concord Fight." In "Historical and Other Papers", pp. 184–194. Concord, 1896. The single article also published separately and in Drake's "History of Middlesex", under "Concord."

Ripley, Ezra. "A History of the Fight at Concord, on the 19th of April, 1775." Concord, 1827. Second edition, 1832.

Rowe, John, Diary of.

2 Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, x, pp. 11*ff*. *See* especially pp. 90–91.

Saxe, Marshal. "Reveries, or, Memoirs Concerning the Art of War, by Maurice, Count de Saxe." Edinburgh, 1759.

Sabine, Lorenzo. "Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of American Revolution." Boston, 1864.

Scott, Madam. Recollections of. In "New England Historical and Genealogical Register", Vol. VIII, p. 188.

Shattuck, Lemuel. "A History of the Town of Concord." Boston and Concord, 1835.

Simes, Thomas. "The Military Guide for Young Officers." Philadelphia, 1776.

Smith, Lieutenant Colonel Francis B. Report to Gage. In Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings for May, 1876, p. 350.

Also in "Source Problems in United States History", New York, 1918, pp. 15*ff*.

Smith, Samuel Abbott. "West Cambridge on the Nineteenth of April, 1775." Boston, 1864.

"Social Circle Memoirs", I. Privately printed. Cambridge, 1882.

Sparks, Jared. "The Writings of Washington", III, Boston, 1834.

The Sparks papers. Many volumes of original and copied documents. In Harvard College Library.

Stedman, C. "History of the American War", I. Dublin, 1794.

Stiles, Reverend Ezra. Literary Diary. Edited by F. B. Dexter. New York, 1901.

"Story of an Old House." By John S. Keyes. Concord, 1902.

Sumner, William H. "History of East Boston." 1858.

Tactics. *See* Encyclopedia Britannica, article under "Infantry"; Thomas G. Frothingham's "Guide to the Military History of the World War", pp. 283*ff*.; Lloyd's "History of Infantry"; Bland's "Military Discipline"; Simes' "Military Guide"; "Gentleman's Compleat Military Dictionary"; "The Manual Exercise for 1764"; Pickering's "Easy Plan of Discipline"; Saxe's "Reveries."

Thacher, James. Military Journal. His account of April 19th is not at first hand.

Thaxter, Joseph. Letter of, dated Edgartown, November 30, 1824. In "United States Literary Gazette", Vol. I, p. 264, and in *Historical Magazine*, Morrisania, New York. Vol. XV (2d Series, Vol. V), pp. 206–207.

Tolman, George. Monographs published by the Concord Antiquarian Society.
"Wright's Tavern." 1902.
"The Concord Minute-Man." 1901.
"Preliminaries of Concord Fight." 1902.
"Events of April Nineteenth." 1902.
"John Jack the Slave and Daniel Bliss the Tory." 1900.

Town Histories. Consult the histories of Concord, Lexington, Arlington, Cambridge, Westford, Framingham, and others. Mostly not listed here.

Trevelyan, Sir George Otto. "The American Revolution." Part One, 1766-1776. New York and London, 1899.

Walpole, Horace. Letter to Sir Horace Mann. In "Letters to Mann", concluding Series, Vol. II, p. 324.

Ward, Artemas, Life of. *See* Charles Martyn.

Warren, John, Diary of. Unpublished MS. in Massachusetts Historical Society.

Warren, Joseph, Life of. *See* Frothingham, Richard.

Weld, Samuel, Diary of. Unpublished. In Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence. Account of the Nineteenth, not at first hand.

"West Cambridge in 1775." *See* Smith, S. A.

Winsor, Justin, editor. Valuable notes and bibliographical material in "Memorial History of Boston", III.
"Narrative and Critical History of America", VI and VIII.

Winthrop, John, Letters of. In correspondence of Richard Price, which see.

Winthrop, Mrs. John. Letter to Mercy Warren. In I Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, XIV, pp. 29–30.

Wemyss, Major James. "Character Sketches of Gage, Percy and others." A copy in the Sparks papers, Harvard College library, XXII, p. 214.

Wolfe, General James. "Instructions to Young Officers." Second edition, London, 1780.

INDEX

Acton Minutemen, 50, 157 *note*, 182 *note*, 183, 184; first at the North Bridge, 188 and *note;* 189 *ff*, 200, 248 *note*, 272.

Adams, James Truslow, 2, 4 *note*.

Adams, John, 47, 56, 117.

Adams, Hannah, 249 and *note*.

Adams, Deacon Joseph, 249.

Adams, Josiah, 185, 187 *note*, 188 *note*, 189 *note*, 191 *note*, 201 *note*, 209 *note*, 214, 264 *note*.

Adams, Samuel, 37, 38, 47, 50, 55, 59, 63, 66, 72 *note*, 77, 86, 91, 93; escape of, 94; his influence on Parker, 96 and *note;* 141.

Aiming, British and American methods of, contrasted, 32–36.

Alarm Company at Concord, 158, 186 *note*.

Alarm List, The, its old and new meaning, 22.

Alewife Brook, 252.

Ammunition on the Nineteenth, 245–246.

Andrews, John, 11, 60, 64, 65 *note*, 67, 260 *note*.

Arlington Street, Boston, 100.

Arms, law regarding, 23 and *note*, 24.

Army of Observation, 41, 42.

Army, proposed New England, preparations for, 42; influence on Gage, 60.

Artillery with Percy, effect of, 239 *ff*, 243, 254, 263–264.

Back Bay, 9, 66, 67 *note;* crossed by troops, 100.

Baldwin, Loammi, 233.

Barker, Ensign John, 11, 12, 36, 38, 39, 40, 64, 100; his account of the expedition, 101 *note;* 131–132, 140, 151 *note*, 160, 164 *note*, 186 *note*, 193, 195, 196, 201 and *note*, 207, 208, 209 *note*, 223, 235 *note*, 258, 268.

Barns, Hannah, 176 *note*.

Barrett, Amos, 150, 151 *note*, 156–157, 165 *note*, 173 *note*, 182 *note*, 185, 191, 198, 207–209, 210 *note*, 219, 220.

Barrett, Colonel James, 50, 84, 96, 114, 115, 155, 156, 164–165; search of his house, 179–180; 185, 186 *and note*, 189, 197, 199, 209 and *note*, 215.

Barrett, Stephen, 180, 182 *note*.

Barrett, Deacon Thomas, 170.

Bateman, Private, 129.

Batherick, Mother, 230.

Beacon Hill, Boston, 8, 53, 76, 259.

Bedford, Minutemen, 50, 182 *note*, 183, 184, 190; route of Billerica and Reading men through, 215; 221.

Beaman, Captain, 72.

Billerica Minutemen, 215, 218, 220. *See also* Ditson.

Bells, 104.

Bernard, Lieutenant Colonel, 71 *note*.

Blanchard, Luther, 191.

Bland, Humphrey, 194–197.

Bliss, Daniel, 18, 160 *note*.

Boston, topography of, 8; fortifications of, 8 and *note*, 9; society in, 9; evacuation of, 44; conditions in spring of 1775 in, 50–57; on the Nineteenth, 226–227; the people watch Percy's retreat, 259–260 and *note;* the troops in, 7, 14, 15.

Boston Committee of Correspondence, 40.
Boston Massacre, 46.
Boston Neck, fortifications on, 8 and *note;* 9, 38, 39, 51, 66, 76, 229, 265.
Boston Port Bill, 6, 10, 51.
Boston, siege of, 5, 265.
Boston Tea Party, 6, 46.
Bowman, Thaddeus, 97, 104.
Boycotting the Army, 24.
Boy with the Ax, 211 *ff.*
Breed, Josiah, 206.
Brigade, The, 73; delay in starting, 226; artillery with, 227; supply-train of, captured, 230; relieves Smith, 232; retreat through Menotomy, 247 *ff;* through Cambridge, 252 *ff;* arrives in Charlestown, 265 *ff.*
British Officers, April 18–19, leave Boston, 85; travel toward Lexington, 86; intercept Revere, 88; capture Revere, 92; release Revere, 94; join Pitcairn, 104; on Lexington Green, 106 and *note.*
British tactics, 35–36; at Lexington, 136 *ff;* at Concord, 193 *ff;* on retreat, 221.
Brookline, 9; Minutemen, 247, 248.
Brooks, Governor, 218 *ff.*
Brooks, Reverend Edward, 206, 230 *note.*
Brown, Captain (companion of De Berniere), 44.
Brown, David, 188 *note,* 190.
Brown, John, of Providence, supplies evidence as to Pitcairn, 126 *ff.*
Brown, Jonas, 191.
Brown, Reuben, 146, 151–152, 156, 159 *note,* 178.
Brown, Solomon, 86, 92, 119.
Buckman Tavern, 95, 135, 143 *note.*
Bunker Hill, 18, 25, 31 and *note,* 39, 62, 117, 157, 184 *note,* 198, 246, 258, 264, 265.
Burgoyne, John, 60, 72 *note.*
Burke, Edmund, 4, 47, 110 *note.*
Burns, Hannah, 176 *note.*
Buttrick, John, 156, 160, 182–183, 187 *notes;* at Concord Fight, 189 *ff;* 199, 200, 208–209 and *note.*
Buttrick, John, Jr., 189 *note.*

Cambridge, 9, 19, 66, 67 *note;* Percy's march out through, 229 *ff;* his retreat through, 252 *ff.*
Cambridge bridge, 40, 229 and *note,* 241, 252–254, 266 *note.*
Cambridge River, 77 *note.*
Cannon, Percy's. *See* Artillery.
Cape Breton. *See* Louisburg.
Carlisle Minutemen, 50, 182, 184.
Carter, Lieutenant William, 258.
Cartridges, 25, 26 *note,* 35 and *note.*
Chamberlain, Mrs., 203, 214 *note.*
Charlestown, 9, 39, 51, 66, 67 *note,* 81; the news of the proposed attack in, 87 and *note;* 250, 253–254; Lord Percy arrives in, 259 *ff;* troops in, 265.
Chatham, Earl of, 4, 5.
Chelmsford Minutemen, 184.
Chevy Chase story, 229 *note.*
Church, Doctor Benjamin, 58–59 and *note.*
Clarke, Reverend Jonas, 10, 66, 86, 97, 116, 120, 147.
Coburn, Frank W., his point of view, 109 *note;* 110 *note,* 117 and *note,* 257.
Comee, Joseph, 145.
Committee of Safety, 21, 57, 82–84, 85, 149, 216; it sends out the alarm, 240; 267.
Conant, Colonel, 66, 87.
Concord, 1, 2, 3; topography of, 8, 153, 155; minutemen of, 22, 39, 45,

46; the muster, 50; provisions and guard in, 59 *note*, 84; Gage plans expedition to, 62; 63, 64 *note*, 66; necessary objective of the detachment, 76, 81, 262; 77, 95; depositions, 115; Smith's detachment enters, 148; the alarm in, 150–151; map of, 152; Colonel Barrett's farm, 155; the reconnaissance, 156–158; the Provincials retire, 158–160; British enter, 160–162; the Provincials withdraw from the town, 163–164; the British in Concord, 167–181; Concord Fight, 183–202; delay after Fight, 206–209; the boy with the ax, 211–214; the British retreat, 215–219; Meriam's Corner, 218–219; 272.

Congress, Continental, 41, 55.

Provincial. 20, 24, 26, 34 and *note*, 37, 39; at Concord, 41; 42, 50, 55; offers pardon to political offenders, 72 and *note;* publishes account of Nineteenth, 124.

"Cornwallis," a, 142.

Cowardice, imputed American. 48 and *note*, 237, 269.

Danvers, Seven Young Men of, 248, 261, 263.

Davis, Cummings E., 141, 142 *note*.

Davis, Captain Isaac, 183, 187 *note;* at Concord Fight, 189 *ff;* 199, 205, 208, 209 *note*.

Dartmouth, Lord, correspondence with Gage, 15, 19, 54, 55 *note*.

Dawes, William, Jr., character and exploits, 77–78; leaves Boston with Warren's message, 78; 81; reaches Lexington, 89; 90; starts for Concord with Revere, 91; escapes capture, 92, 94.

De Berniere, Ensign Henry, 11, 44 and *note*, 45–46, 59 *note*, 64, 71–72, 100; evidence on Lexington shooting, 130–131; 144, 161, 162 and *note*, 164 and *note;* his diary style, 166; 197, 212 *note*, 215, 216, 217, 224, 258, 268.

Depositions, Acton, 164 *note*, 209 *note*.

Concord, 114–115, 164 *note*.

Lexington, 98 *note*, 108–109 *notes;* Parker's, 109 *note;* of 1775 and 1825 contrasted, 110 *note*, 114–119; 210.

Lincoln, 115, 164 *note*.

Revere's. *See* Revere, Paul.

Derby, Hasket, 262.

Detachment, Smith's, composition of, 68–73; starts from Boston, 74 *ff;* approaches Lexington, 98–99; its route and march, 100 *ff;* escape of the Committeemen, 102; Smith's orders, 103; he sends Pitcairn in advance, 103; is joined by Revere's captors, 104; huzzas, 108 and *note;* the shooting by, 111 *ff;* use of pistols, 112; marches to Concord, 148; enters Concord, 160; occupies the North Bridge, 164; doings in Concord, 167–181; Concord Fight, 183 *ff;* retreats, 207 *ff;* rescued by Percy, 232; fatigue of, 234–235; resumes retreat, in the van, 239; again under fire, 254; safety in sight, 259; in Charlestown, 269.

Devens, Richard, 85, 87 and *note*.

Diarists, 11, 272.

Ditson, of Billerica, tarred and feathered, 12 and *note*, 24.

Donkin, Major R., 213 *note*, 235 *note*, 268.

Doolittle, Amos, engravings by, 8; 23 *note;* 109 *note;* Lexington print, 133–141; 144, 152–153; first Con-

cord print, 161, 171, 177; second Concord print, 200–201; second Lexington print, 235 *note*, 256.
Dorchester, 9, 247.
Dorr, Ebenezer, 78 note.
Downer, Doctor Eliphalet, 248.
Drake, Samuel Adams, the uncertainty of his unsupported statements, 70–71.

Earl, Ralph, 133, 141.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, rebukes controversialists, 118 and *note;* his comment on Ripley, 201.
Emerson, Reverend William, 10, 23, 150 and *notes*, 151 *notes;* his diary quoted, 158; 159 *notes*, 160, 163; remains with his family, 165; his diary, 166 *note;* oration, 167 *ff;* 184, 186 *note*, 201 *note;* at Concord Fight, 203 *ff;* 209, 212 *note;* 213, 217, 272.
Evelyn, Captain W. Glanville, 11, 268.
"Excursions" by the Regulars, 39–41.

Field Days, 36; at Salem, 42–44; at Framingham, 45–46; 46 *note*, 50, 150.
Firearms, hard to get, 23; Provincial Congress recommends manufacturing, 24; from Spain and Holland, 26 *note;* the firelock of 1775, 28 *ff;* range, 57, 58 *note;* a flash in the pan, 105 and *note;* the gun captured at Concord, 141–142; as used on the Nineteenth, 245 *ff*.
See also Flintlocks.
Firelock. *See* Flintlocks.
Fisheries Act, 5, 48.
Fiske Hill, Lexington, 222.
Flankers, British, 221, 242, 248, 252, 254, 256.
See also Light Infantry.
Flintlocks, 24, 28 and *note*, 29 and *note*, 30, 105 and *note;* the Concord gun, 141–142; the musketman's problem, 245 *ff*.
Fontenoy, 199.
Foster, Edmund, 218 *ff*, 222.
Fox, Charles James, 4.
Fox Hill, Boston, 100.
Framingham, Muster, 45–46, 49, 164; Minutemen, 215, 220.
Franklin, Benjamin, 47.

Gage, General Thomas, arrives at Boston, 11; his difficulties, 12; summons Haldimand, 13; the size of his army, 13, 14 and *note;* correspondence with Dartmouth, 15, 19, 54, 55 *note;* the King's belief in him, 15–16; 18, 19, 20; withholds supplies, 24; gets powder from Rhode Island, 25; 41, 44; his "ministerial army", 47 *note;* his two possible courses of action, 53 *ff;* fails to act on the sixth of March, 55; the problem of the Provincial stores, 58; knowledge of Whig preparations, 59; his character, 60; ruled by his wife? 61; lack of military talent, 62; decision to send troops to Concord, 63; by boat, 64; preparations, 65 *ff;* his plans detected by the men on the Common, 74–75; 95, 104, 112; "Circumstantial Account", 124; 144 and *note*, 148, 164 *note*, 186 *note*, 196–197, 226, 238, 240, 265 and *note*, 266–267, 269, 272.
Gardner, Major Isaac, 252.
George III, 4, 7, 47.
Gerry, Elbridge, 58, 86, 102–103, 114.
Gordon, Reverend William, 10, 64 and *note*, 71, 104, 105 and *note*, 111, 121; his Lexington testimony, 122–

123; 125, 133, 144 and *note*, 147, 174–175, 203, 205 and *note*, 213, 214, 243–244.
Gould, Edward Thoroton, 109 *note*, 115, 129, 186 *note;* his capture, 205–206 and *notes;* 216, 231 and *note*, 237.
Graves, Admiral, 72.
Great Meadows, Concord, 218.
Greene, David, 259, 260 *note*.
Grenadiers, 64, 68–69, 77; at Lexington, 135, 145; enter Concord, 161; 165, 167, 207, 219, 234, 237, 254, 259 and *note*, 264, 269.
Groton men at Concord? 185 *note*.
Guns. *See* Flintlocks.
Gunsmiths, vote concerning, 24.

Haldimand, General Frederic, Gage summons him, 13; his diary, 15, 16 *note*.
Hale, Edward Everett, 67 *note*, 76, 228 *note*.
Hancock, John, his fence hacked, 12; 37, 38, 50, 58, 63, 66, 72 *note*, 77, 83, 86–87; at Lexington, 90; wishes to fight, 91; escapes, 93–94; 96, 141, 252.
Handley, Charles, 189 *note*, 212, 214.
Harrington, Caleb, 143, 144 *note*, 145.
Harrington, Jonathan, death of, 143.
Harrington, Levi, his evidence, 119 *note*.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 161 *note*, 214 and *note*.
Haywood, James, death of, 223 *note*, 245–246.
Heath, General William, instructions as town delegate, 20; 21, 35, 42, 58, 83, 96, 216, 240–241; his problem, 242 *ff;* his orders to Pickering, 263 and *note;* 272.
History, tendencies in Modern, i, ii, 1–3, 271.
Hoar, Ebenezer Rockwood, 142.
Hoar, Senator George F., 141.
Hosmer, Abner, 183; death of, 191; 205, 208.
Hosmer, Joseph, 160 and *note*, 186, 187 and *note*.
House with the Bullet Hole, 207.
Hudson, Charles, on statesmen at Lexington, 109 *note;* on Pitcairn's order to fire, 125 *note;* 168, 185; accuses British of vandalism, 251.
Hudson, Frederic, 159 *note*, 175 *note*, 179 *note*, 180 *note*.
Hull, Lieutenant, 217 and *note*.
Hunt Farm, 182 and *note*.
Huzzaing, 108 and *note*.

Jefferson, Thomas, 47.
Joinville, Seigneur de, 210.
Jones, Elisha, 180 and *note*, 184, 207–209.
Jones, Ephraim, 174–175, 176 *note*.

Lafayette, Marquis de, in Concord, 117.
Lake George, battle of, 18 and *note*, 31, 46.
Laurie, Captain Walter Swain, 164; at the North Bridge, 193–202; 216 *note*.
Lechmere, Richard, Letters of, 52.
Lechmere Point, 100 and *note*.
Lee, Charles, his opinion of Gage, 60.
Lee's Hill, Concord. 164 *note*.
Leighton, Hannah, deposition of, 183.
Letter-writers, 11, 272.
Lexington, 1, 2, 3; topography of, 8; 13, 46, 50, 63, 66, 89; coming of the messengers to, 90 *ff;* Hancock and

Adams depart from, 94; the alarm, 95; lack of plan at, 95–96; Bowman brings news to, 97; hurried assembly at, 97–98; British approach, 104–105; the British enter, 106; map of, 107; the Regulars at the Green, 108; Parker orders the dispersing, 109 and *note;* the firing at, 110–114; depositions, 115–117; Harold Murdock's analysis, 119; contemporary evidence, 120 *ff;* Pitcairn's statement, 125; Stiles' analysis, 127; British testimony, 129 *ff;* Doolittle print of, 133 *ff;* Provincials in, 143–146; regulars depart from, 147; first prisoners, 147; 183, 213; the fight at Fiske Hill, 222; the Minutemen of, fight again, 223; 224; Percy rescues Smith at, 232; the pause for rest in, 233 *ff;* 238; Heath in, 241; the church in, fired upon, 244; 261, 272.

Liberty Pole, Concord, its position, 158, 159 *note;* is cut down, 167.

Liberty Street, Concord, 182.

Liberty Tree, Boston, 168 *note.*

Light Infantry, 64, 68–69, 77, 104 *ff;* enter Concord, 160–161; 164 *note,* 167, 207, 212, 218–219, 221 *ff,* 234, 254, 269.

Lincoln, Benjamin, 83.

Lincoln, fighting in, 220 *ff.*

Lincoln, Minutemen of, 50; alarmed, 148 *ff;* arrive in Concord, 156; 185, 190.

"Lionel Lincoln," 71, 76, 103.

Littleton Minutemen, 184.

Loading and firing, 32 *ff.*

"Locking," 136 *ff,* 195.

Longfellow, Henry W., "Paul Revere's Ride", 66, 89 *note.*

Looting, 169, 249, 250 and *note.*

Louisburg, 31, 45, 46, 48 *note.*

Mackenzie, Lieutenant, 202 *note,* 231 *note,* 232, 233–234, 235 *note,* 238, 239 *note,* 252, 258, 265 *note.*

Maps, Boston and Vicinity, 67 *note,* 100, 102.

Marblehead Minutemen, 264 *note.*

Marksmanship, 27–36, 255 *ff.*

Marines, 227, 253, 254.

Marr, James, 105 *note,* 129.

Marrett, Reverend John, Diary of, 120.

Massachusetts Assembly, 19–20.

Medford, 89.

Memory, as a basis of History, 117–118; Charles Hudson's, 125 *note.*

Menotomy, 84 *ff;* 98, 102 and *note,* 169, 206, 216; Percy's supply train captured in, 230; 231, 240, 247 *ff.*

Meriam's Corner, 153; the reconnaissance, 157–158; 161; the fight at, 218 *ff.*

Miles, Captain Charles, 189–190.

Military stores in Concord, small amount of, 58–59; orders concerning, 84–85; concealment of, 149; at Colonel Barrett's, 155, 173 *note,* 177.

Militia, 17 and *note,* 18, 19; reorganization of, 21 *ff;* lack of musket practice, 30; 42–46, 49, 50, 81, 208–209; numbers in pursuit, 243–244; action in pursuit, 245 *ff.*

Milton, 9.

"Ministerial Army", 47 *note,* 181.

Ministers, 10, 11.

Minott, Captain, 158.

Minott, Doctor, 217.

Minott, Timothy, 184.

Minuteman Statue, Concord, 154.

Minutemen, 21, 22, 23, 30, 50; Gage's opinion of, 57.
See also Militia, and under names of towns.

Mitchell, Major, 92, 106 *note*.
Moore, John, 183.
Moulton, Martha, petition of, 171–173.
Munroe, Ebenezer, 119 *note*, 143 *note*, 144 *note*.
Munroe, John, 119 *note*, 143 *note*, 144 *note*.
Munroe, William, 86, 90; deposition of, 91 *note;* musters the Lexington company, 97 and *note*, 98 *note*.
Munroe's Tavern, 235.
Murdock, Harold, his service to history, 119 and *note;* 197 *note*, 200 *note*, 251, 258.
Musters. *See* Field-Days.

Napoleon, his musketry, 34.
Nineteenth of April in history, 1–2, 271–273.
Norfolk exercise, The, 34 and *note*.
North Bridge, Concord, 154, 162, 164, 180, 182 and *note*, 184; the Fight at, 186 *ff;* tactics at, 193 *ff;* the "scalping", 211 *ff;* 247.
North Church, Boston, 79 and *note;* 259.

Officers, British. *See* British Officers.
Old Manse, 154 and *note*, 165, 180, 214 *note*.
Otis, Harrison Gray, 227.

Park Square, Boston, 100.
Parker, John, 95; his lack of plan, 97–99; and the crisis, 108; gives order to disperse, 109 and *note;* 112.
Parker, Jonas, 119 *note*, 136, 143 and *note*.
Parsons, Captain Lawrence, 164, 179; his detachment returns, 212, 215, 216.
Paterson, General, 15–16.
Payson, Minister of Chelsea, 230.
Percy, Hugh, Earl, 11, 13 and *note*, 14, 39, 40, 56, 67, 73; on Boston Common, 74; 76, 84, 95, 206, 213, 215; marches from Boston, 226 *ff;* his route, 229 *note;* his supply train captured, 230; rescues Smith, 232; the rest in Lexington, 233 *ff;* qualities of, 237; charges of atrocity by troops of, 238, 249–251; retreat through Menotomy, 247 *ff;* through Cambridge, 252; takes Somerville road, 253 and *note;* reaches Charlestown, 259 *ff;* his verdict and prophecy, 269–270; 272.
Peters, Reverend Samuel, 53 *note*.
Phips' Farm, 100 and *note*.
Pickering, Timothy, Jr., his "Easy Plan," 35; letters of, 42–43; 137, 194, 257; character of, 260; and the news of Lexington, 261; his slow march, 262; opportunity lost by, 263–264.
Pierce, Abijah, 141, 186 *note*.
Pierpont, Reverend John, poem by, 89 *note;* 189 *note*.
Pierpont, Robert, 23 *note*, 26 *note*.
Pitcairn, Major John, 70–71; sent in advance of Smith, 103; his advance-guard, 104; orders his men to load but not to fire, 105; and the shooting at Lexington, 106 *ff;* mounted officers with, 106 and *note;* tries to disarm Minutemen, 108–111; could not stop the firing, 112; 120–124; character of, 125; his actions, 125 *ff;* De Berniere's statement concerning, 130–131; in Doolittle's print, 135; 139; 144; 161, 162; at Wright Tavern, 168 and *note;* 171, 173–175, 179, 181, 222, 225, 227, 272.

Plundering. *See* Looting.
Pole, Captain Munday, 162.
Political situation, the, 3–7.
Pope, Richard, ms. 148, 233, 234.
Porter, Asahel, 143.
Powder, 25, 26 and *note*, 30, 59, 62, 246, 255 and *note*.
Powder Alarm, The, 13, 19, 25, 62.
Preparedness, in 1775, 17 *ff*, 41 *ff*; lack of, 81 *ff*, 184 *note*.
See also Arms; Firearms; Military Stores; Powder.
Prescott, Doctor Samuel, rides with Revere, 91; escapes capture, 92; 93, 148–149 and *note*; reaches Concord, 150–151.
Prescott, William 18, 25, 246.
Priming, 33, 35 and *note*.
Profanity, 168.
Prospect Hill, Somerville, 254, 257, 259.
Prussian shooting, 34.
Pulling, Captain John, 79.
Punkatasset Hill, Concord, 182 and *note*, 183.
Putnam, Israel, 19, 25, 45, 222.

Queen's Arm, 257.
Quincy, Dorothy, 90, 94 *note*, 218.
Quincy, Edmund, 266.

Reading Minutemen, 215, 218–219, 220.
Regulating Act, 6.
Revere, Paul, 50 and *note*; character of, 51; his watch on the Tories, 52; 65–67, 69; Warren sends for him, 77; leaves Boston by boat, 79–80; in Charlestown, 87; his ride, 88–90; captured, 92; released, 94; saves Hancock's papers, 97–99; 111, 148; his deposition and letter, 50 *note*, 202 *note*; 259.
Rifles, 28 and *note*; 257.
Ripley, Ezra, 130, 154 and *note*, 159 *note*, 188 *note*; Emerson's remarks on, 201; 212 *note*, 213.
Robinson, John, 184, 189 and *note*, 190, 200.
Rocks, The, 98, 102 *note*, 247.
Rowe, John, 67.
Roxbury, 8, 9, 39, 66, 67 *note*, 81, 229, 247.
Royal Welsh Fusileers, 239 and *note*; relieved as rear-guard, 253.
Russell, Jason, 248.

Salem, British expedition to, 39, 49, 260; field days in, 42, 43, 46; the news of Lexington in, 261 *ff*; the controversy, 263 *note*.
Sanderson, Elijah, 139.
Saxe, Marshal, 31; theories on infantry tactics, 137–139; 194, 198–199.
"Scalping" at Concord Bridge, 211 *ff*, 235, 239, 268.
Scott, Madam. *See* Quincy, Dorothy.
"Septimius Felton", 161 *note*.
Sewall, Jonathan, 25; letters of, 52.
Shattuck, Lemuel, his sources, 151 *note*; 159 *note*, 179, 188 *note*, 189 *note*.
Simonds, Joshua, 144 and *note*.
Smith, Lieutenant Colonel Francis, 70; Tory guides, 72; numbers of his force, 73; expedition of, 100 *ff*; sends for reinforcements, 104; not on the ground at Lexington, 106 *note*; 124, 129, 135, 144 and *note*; always late, 145; 147; marches to Concord, 148; 161, 162, 181, 207–208, 215, 216–217, 222, 224–227; rescued by Percy, 232; last complaint of, 268.
Smith, Solomon, 164 *note*, 186 *note*, 201 *note*, 209 *note*, 210, 214.

Smith, William, 149, 156, 187 and *note*.
Somerville, 9; Smith's route in, 102; Percy's route in, 253; 259.
South Bridge, Concord, 153, 162, 167, 178, 182 *note*, 183, 184.
Stamp Act, 3, 46.
Stedman, Charles, 74 and *note*, 231 *note*, 234, 235 *note*.
Stiles, Ezra, 10; diary of, 121; analysis of Lexington story, 126 *ff;* 131, 133, 135, 140, 244.
Stone, Bradley, deposition of, 187 *note;* 188 *note*.
Stone Walls, 235 *note*, 242–243, 256.
Strategy, American lack of, 81 *ff;* of Parker and Hancock at Lexington, 95–96 and *note;* of Barrett at Concord, 215–216; 240.
"Street-Firing", 194 *ff*.
Sudbury Minutemen, 182 *note*, 184, 215, 218, 220.
Sumner, General, 218, 219 *note*.
Supplies, Committee of, 82 *ff*.
Sutherland, Lieutenant, 105–106 *note*.
Swett, pamphleteer, 264 *note*.

Tactics, European methods used by the British, 31 *ff;* as illustrated by the Doolittle print, 136–141; at the North Bridge, 193 *ff;* on the retreat, 220; British opinion of American, 235, 268; Percy's, 239; Heath's, 242 *ff;* American sniping, 256–258.
Tenth British Infantry, in the lead at Lexington, 129–130; one man wounded, 144; at the North Bridge, 200.
Thaxter, Reverend Joseph, 184, 185, 186 *note*, 190, 200, 209, 230 *note*, 243, 246.
Thorp, Thomas, 164 *note*, 186 *note*, 201 *note*, 209 *note*, 210, 211 *note*.
Tidd, William, 106 *note*, 119 *note*.
Tories, 5, 6, 9, 10 and *note*, 19, 37, 50–51, 52, 61; with Smith's detachment, 71–73; 267–268.
Trevelyan, Sir George Otto, 5.

Vandalism, charges of, 249–250.
Volunteers with the detachment, 71.

Ward, General Artemas, 45, 240.
Warren, John, Diary of, 121–122.
Warren, Doctor Joseph, 18, 37–39, 48, 50; oration by, 54–57; gets wind of Gage's plan, 76 and *note;* sends messengers, 77–78; 240–241, 247–248, 266–268, 272.
Washington, George, 47, 58 *note*, 96.
Watertown, alarm of March 30th, 40; General Heath in, 241.
Watson's Corner, Cambridge, 241, 252.
Welles, Gideon, 81.
Wellington, Benjamin, 97.
Wemyss, Major, opinion of Gage, 61.
Westford Minutemen, 184.
Wheeler, Captain Timothy, 177.
Wheildon, William, 79 *note*.
Whigs, 10 and *note*, 11, 12; their imputed cowardice, 13 *note;* 19; steal cannon, 25; 37, 41, 50, 51, 52; proposed arrest of leaders of, 54; 55, 57, 71, 237.
Whittemore, Samuel, 248.
Wilson, Jonathan, 183; killed, 221.
Winter Hill, Somerville, 89, 263.
Winthrop, John, 116, 244; his wife's letter, 231 *note*, 266 *note*.
Woburn Minutemen, 215, 220, 233, 242.
Wolfe, James, 31, 137, 197, 199 *note*.
Wood, Amos, 178.
Wood, Ephraim, 178.
Wright Tavern, 151, 153; the Pitcairn story, 168; 169 and *note*.